

5 B 12

A N
Historical Account
O F T H E
ANTIENT PARLIAMENTS
O F
F R A N C E,
O R
States-General of the Kingdom.
I N

FOURTEEN LETTERS.
S H E W I N G

The Quality of the Members that composed those Assemblies; the Form of their Deliberations and Proceedings; the vast Extent of their Power; their most celebrated Judgments; the Characters of the Princes that called them, from *Charlemagne* to *Louis XI.* and the several perfidious Artifices and Steps of the *French Kings* and their Ministers, for gradually reducing the Nation from a Plenitude of Liberty, to its present State of Servitude and Slavery.

To which is added,

A CHRONOLOGICAL ABRIDGMENT of the History of FRANCE,
under the Reigns of the Kings of the FIRST RACE.

V O L. II.

The Whole written in *French* by that accurate and faithful Historian

The Count DE BOULAINVILLIERS,
The Merit of whose WORKS has caused them to be prohibited in
FRANCE.

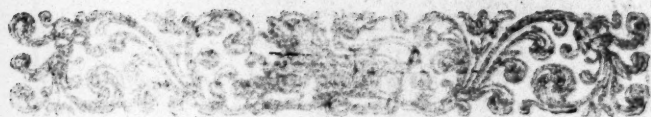
And now translated for the Use and Instruction of such BRITISH
Lovers of LIBERTY, as cannot read the ORIGINAL:

By CHARLES FORMAN, Esq;

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. BRINDLEY in *New-Bond-Street*, Bookseller to his
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BRITANNICVM**



LETTERS

ON THE

ANTIEN^T PARLIAMENTS

OF

F R A N C E

LETTER IX.

Continuation of king John's reign. States of 1355 and 1356, with extracts of the ordinances made in them. Other states of the years 1357, 1358, and 1359.



If my former letters have shewn you what the states of the kingdom, and the orders that compose them, essentially are; you have not yet seen in what manner they held their sittings, and formed their deliberations, nor how far their jurisdiction extended: but I neither could, nor

Letter IX.

Vol. II.

B

shall

Letter shall explain them but gradually, as the
 IX. facts discover themselves, by the help of
 the antient monuments we have left; in
 regard to which I must follow the order
 of date, for fear of increasing confusion
 and obscurity in a matter so little known.
 I now propose to entertain you with the
 most important of the three parts which we
 want; I mean, the effectual jurisdiction of
 the states: upon which it is necessary to
 fix your idea, that we may neither take any
 thing from the sovereign power of the
 monarch, nor reduce all the function of
 the subjects assembled together to a mere
 passive obedience; or, at most, to the
 right of advising and petitioning in vain.
 The opportunity of the states general as-
 sembled in the year 1355, is favourable
 to my design; since, upon their remon-
 strances, king *John* gave a declaration
 which irrevocably established the right of
 those assemblies, and which, upon that ac-
 count, might be justly compared to the *great*
charter granted to the *English* by a prince
 of the same name; were it not unfortu-
 nately too true that it has been buried in
 oblivion for above two hundred years past,
 even so far that there is no publick instru-
 ment of it remaining, except one copy
 preserved in the king's library, from
 whence I took that of which I shall give
 you an extract in the course of this letter,

ac-

according to the method I have already Letter followed in regard to several others. But IX.
I must first say something of those states themselves, and the most important affairs transacted by them.

All the authors who have, in this respect, copied the great chronicle, inform us, that the three estates of the kingdom were convoked by a special mandate from the king, "to meet at *Paris* the 29th of " *November* 1355, and there to give him " aid and counsel in the war against his " adversary of *England*; for which purpose were present the prelates and the chapters, the abbots and their convents, the barons of *France*, and the deputies of the good substantial towns: to whom the king caused the state of the war to be set forth in his presence, in the parliament chamber, on the *Wednesday* after *St. Andrew's-Day*, by master *Peter de la Forest*, then archbishop of *Rouen*, and chancellor of *France*. And the said chancellor required of them in the king's name, that they would consult together what aid they could give the king. To which the said states made answer, viz. the clergy by the mouth of monseigneur *John de Craon*, then archbishop of *Rheims*; the nobles by the duke of *Athens*, *Walter de Briende*; and the

Extract
of the proceedings
of the assembly of
the states
in the year
1355.

Letter " cities by *Stephen Marcel*, then provost
 XI. " of the merchants of *Paris*; that they were
 ~~~~~ " all disposed to live and die with their  
 " king, to employ their lives and fortunes  
 " in his service, and to consult together  
 " for that purpose. But they declared at  
 " the same time, that they laboured un-  
 " der several publick and private grievan-  
 " ces, which they desired might be re-  
 " dressed, and provision made against  
 " them, both for the advantage of the  
 " king and the whole nation. Then, by  
 " the king's *will* and permission, they be-  
 " gan their deliberations. 1. On the  
 " number of troops necessary to resist the  
 " *English* invasion, which was settled at  
 " 30,000 men at arms". A prodigious  
 army, if we suppose that each man  
 had two archers on horseback, besides the  
 cousteliers and the pages; for then it must  
 amount to 90,000 horse, without reckon-  
 ing the foot, consisting of the commons  
 of the kingdom, who were to march from  
 all the towns near the seat of war. " 2. Up-  
 " on the sums necessary for paying so great  
 " an army; which were settled according  
 " to the estimates drawn up by the king  
 " and his council. 3. Upon ways and means  
 " to raise those sums, as speedily and equally  
 " as possible, from all the contributable  
 " members:" And with that view, they chose  
 to re-establish the *Gabelles*, and the duty of  
 eight

eight *deniers per livre* on all sales, commodities, drinkables, victuals, and merchandize for that year; for which purpose they should be allowed to chuse proper persons to collect it. But, because those who formerly had the direction of the imposts, in the reign of *Philip of Valois*, very carefully conceal'd the produce of their receipt, the king strongly insisted on the insufficiency of that former fund; and added, that there was no other certain method to assure the pay of the army, but to lay a general capitation, which was a more natural and less troublesome way than to raise the sum which the states were disposed to grant. But the states being persuaded that the equality of the contribution would be more perfect in the method they had chosen, they firmly persisted in it; and, in order to verify the sufficiency or insufficiency of the fund, they thought they had no more to do but to meet again on the first of *March* following; to which day they adjourned by the king's leave, promising then to make good any deficiency that should be found in the sum they intended to grant.

Nevertheless, this was but the least part of the success which the states were to produce: for the main business in hand was to obtain a redress of the grievances of all the orders, and oblige the

*Steps taken by the king of Navarre on this occasion.*



Letter IX. king to follow a quite contrary conduct in the administration of the government, to what he had practised till then. There is likewise great appearance, that the king of *Navarre*, who was in high credit among the people, and consequently had equal influence over the deputies, inclined them by his private views to solicit and demand the establishment of a certain rule, without which they were sensible enough that all the aids they should grant would be to no purpose. On the one hand, he thereby rendered the king more odious, by destroying the confidence his subjects might have reposed in him; and on the other, he shewed the world that he preferred the interest of the state to that of his own family, and all the ties of blood. We cannot exactly tell what part he acted with the king; but if any credit can be given to what *du Tillet* writes concerning the intrigues of those times, we may say, that he endeavoured to make him reject the offers of the states, rather than engage himself to make any alteration in the government. Nevertheless it is certain, that king *John's* faithful servants shewed him, that it was but just to satisfy the states, at least, in part of their demands; besides, that it was impossible for him to carry on the war alone. But as violence, inconsideration, and affectation

tion of an unlimited power, were his predominant passions, he was a long time before he could determine in favour of the resolution of the states; especially, when he found that they were obstinate and fixed in their design, not to leave him the fingering the produce of the new taxes, but to collect and dispose of them themselves; for this was the knot of the affair. The coin was so debased, that the value of the mark of silver was at eighteen *livres*, instead of five *livres* five *sols* only, which it went for in the beginning of his reign; and the first thing the states demanded, was to have it reduced to its true value; offering 50,000 *livres*, which they granted in real weight, at the rate of five *livres* five *sols* the mark, making 8750 marks of pure silver, for the said sum of 50,000 *livres*. But if the king could have got them into his hands, and converted them into specie of his usual coinage, and by that means have made them pass for 18 *livres* a mark, he would have made near 160,000 *livres* of them, and consequently trebled his profit: a great resource for a covetous and yet expensive prince, and for his favourites and ministers, who were as little concerned for the publick welfare, as they were eager to promote their own private interest.

Letter IX.  
The king is at a stand in regard to the part he must act.

Letter

IX.  
 ~~~~~  
*Luxury,
 and the
 love of
 pleasure,
 infect all
 conditions*

Historians have indeed remarked, that the genius of the nation seemed then quite changed. Not only luxury, but a strong passion for pleasure, had diffused themselves into all ranks and conditions, instead of the useful amusements of the former times. The nobility were given to gaming, gallantry, and the love of women of the town (so they not only then called burghers wives, but a long time after;) for ladies of a higher quality still resided in their castles in the country, where their innocence found a protection in solitude, and the distinction of their birth. The change of fashion in their clothes was a consequence of those new passions: they piqued themselves in becoming agreeable; they invented the use of feathers in their caps to make them appear taller, laced and embroidered clothes, shoes * *a la poulaine*, which may well be called the most ridiculous sort they had ever worn: and in fine, tho' the use of helmets did not allow them to wear their hair any great length, they, nevertheless, did not neglect to improve that ornament. Thus by a disorder, which has continued to the age we live in, the greater the publick calamities were, the more

* So called either from the fashion of them, or from being of a young colt's skin.

were

were luxury, carelessness, and frivolous vanity in vogue; and not without a great advantage to the prince: for those that are possessed with such passions, very seldom have any ideas of the reformation necessary for establishing an equitable government. Nevertheless, *John* was obliged to yield, in spite of the common practice of the age; the consequence of which was the drawing up that fine ordinance, which would have secured the publick liberty for ever, had it been possible for *France* to have been happy. Here is the extract of it, which I promised.

Letter
XI.

“ By the first article the king, having set forth, that he has called together the good people of his kingdom, of the *Languedoil* and of the * *custom-coun-tries* of all the three estates, in order to have advice, counsel, and deliberation, how to resist the enemies of the kingdom, says, it has been concluded that he ought to carry on a vigorous war against his adversaries both by sea and land, according to the order of the captains which shall be chosen to manage it; and, that to defray the expences of that war, a *gabelle* shall be laid upon salt throughout the whole extent of the

Extract of the ordinance given by the king for a redress of grievances.

* *Countries that were govern'd by particular antient customs, separate from the other parts of the kingdom.*

custom-

Letter " custom-countries, and likewise a duty
 IX. " of eight *deniers per livre* upon every
 ~~~~~ " thing sold in the said countries, except  
 " sales of inheritances; which duty shall  
 " be paid by the seller, without excep-  
 " tion of persons; whether clerks, nobles,  
 " churchmen, hospitalers nobles and not  
 " nobles, exchangers, and others. The  
 " king's *will* is, in order to set a good ex-  
 " ample, that neither himself, nor the  
 " queen his wife, his children, nor any of  
 " his lineage, shall be exempt from it; pro-  
 " mising to make it his business to induce  
 " or force, by all the ways that shall be ad-  
 " vised by the three estates, all such as will  
 " not comply with and satisfy the said im-  
 " post; and where the king cannot make  
 " all his different countries consent to it, he  
 ~~~~~ " shall make appear the diligence and me-  
 " thods he made use of for procuring the
 " said payment. This said impost shall cease
 " in the month of *March* next, and then
 " the three estates shall provide in another
 " manner for the payment of the troops,
 " and the votes of two of the three estates
 " shall not bind the third; and in case of a
 " change of imposition, any sums raised in
 " consequence of the present ordinance, be-
 " fore the first day of *March*, shall be ap-
 " plied to the profit of the places in which
 " they were collected. Moreover the king's
 " *will* is, that for the recovering and le-
 " vying the said impost, receivers shall be
 " appointed

“ appointed by the states, who shall be ob-
“ liged to behave according to the instruc-
“ tions they give them.

“ By the 2d article, it is ordered,
“ that in every bailiwick or seneschaly,
“ the states shall appoint nine loyal good
“ honest men, three of each order, as su-
“ per-intendants-general of all affairs re-
“ lating to the said impost, without be-
“ ing obliged to render any accompt of
“ the produce of it; because they shall
“ commission other good substantial men
“ to collect it, who are to be accompt-
“ able for it.

“ The 3d article attributes to the
“ receivers, general and particular, the
“ right to constrain all sorts of persons,
“ exempt or not exempt, by all the me-
“ thods they shall think fit; and in case
“ of disobedience, the said receivers shall
“ adjourn them before the super-inten-
“ dants appointed by the states, whose
“ judgments shall be executed without ap-
“ peal, as arrets of parliament: the clerks
“ to be judged by clerks, nobles by nobles,
“ every one according to his right, by the
“ advice and counsel of the other super-
“ intendants, tho' of different order.

“ By the 4th it is ordered, that the su-
“ perintendants shall take an oath to the
“ states, and the commissioners or re-
“ ceivers to the superintendants, to be-
“ have

Letter " have duely in the exercise of their re-
IX. " spectiue functions.

~ " The 5th orders, that the whole
" produce of the said aids, whether in
" funds, or fines laid upon contraveners,
" shall be applied to the war, without
" being liable to be diverted through any
" cause or pretence whatsoever; either by
" the king, the queen, their children, or any
" others of their relations, or by their offi-
" cers. And if any private persons should
" obtain, by surprize or importunity, the
" king's letters to the contrary, even under
" pretext of a simple loan, no regard shall
" be had to them: ordering that the su-
" perintendants appointed by the states,
" shall have a right to cause themselves to
" be assisted by the commons and people
" of the good cities, where they may be
" threatened with violence. Neverthe-
" less, not allowing those superintendants
" to order or require any thing but by u-
" nanimous consent; and if they cannot
" agree, they shall be brought to it by the
" sovereign justice of the parliament.

" By the 6th, it is ordered, that the
" states shall meet again in the month of
" *March*, then next ensuing, to see and
" hear the accounts of the said aids, and
" produce of them, in presence of the
" king's council; and if the aids of the
" present subsidy are not found sufficient,
" they

“ they shall be authoris'd to augment the Letter
“ *gabelle* or aid, as occasion requires, or IX.
“ else provide for the pay of the army in ~~~~~
“ another manner; without, neverthe-
“ less, one order being bound by the votes
“ of the other two, except by its own
“ consent.

“ The 7th explains, that the tax of
“ the said aids is to last a year, having
“ been thus granted by the three estates:
“ so that if the war did not end within
“ the year, the said three estates remain
“ convoked at *Paris* on *St. Andrew's-*
“ *Day* next ensuing, to consult about the
“ necessities which might then occur, and
“ grant new aids, after having seen and ex-
“ amined in what manner the former
“ were employed; in such sort, neverthe-
“ less, that if the three orders were not all
“ agreed, the affair should remain unde-
“ cided, and the present aids be continued
“ in the manner they are established:
“ and when the war should be ended,
“ the said aids should cease immediately,
“ and the sums remaining of them be em-
“ ployed to the profit of the places where
“ they were rais'd.”

*Sequel of
the ordi-
nance,
which
compre-
hends the
engage-
ments in-
to which
the king
promises
to enter.*

By the following articles, which contain
the engagements the king is willing to en-
ter into on his part, he promises, being
touched with the complaints of the people,
and the great oppression they have suffer-
ed, to enter.

Letter
IX.

ed, " 1. To make good and heavy money of the standard of fifty-two *sols* to the mark, which shall have course for twenty *sols Paris*; not daring to enforce it more, for fear of causing too much loss to his good subjects. Promises besides to make silver coin, such as that he will take but six * *livres* profit on the mark of silver : and if it happens that the three estates, who are to resemble on St. *Andrew's-Day* next, shall find, whether upon account of the end of the war, or for any other reason, that the coin is still too weak; promises to reduce the gold *denier* of fifty-two in the mark, to the value of thirteen *sols* four *deniers*, and the silver coin in proportion; so that the mark of gold may be just worth eleven marks of silver. And as to the black money, he orders, in favour of the poor, that one day in the week be set apart for making *mailles* and *deniers*. At the time when the good coin begins to have currency, he *wills* that a standard for the verification of the weight, value, and allay of it, shall be kept by the

* *Though the French copy says livres, we believe it should be sols: for if the mark was to be but fifty-two sols, how could the king have a profit of six livres, above double the value of the mark of silver, from it. Several trips of this nature makes it to be wished that the author had given a table of the coin of those days.*

“ archbishops, bishops, cathedral chap- Letter
“ ters, the greatest nobles, and in every IX.
“ city, to the end that no change may be
“ made in the coin for the future; which
“ he renounces both for himself and his
“ successors.

“ 2. He promises that for the direction
“ of the mints, he will chuse good, loy-
“ al, substantial persons, who shall be o-
“ bliged to take an oath to him in presence
“ of the superintendants elected by the
“ states.

“ 3. He promises, and binds himself to
“ take an oath, and cause it to be taken
“ by his son the duke of *Normandy*, his
“ other children, the lords related to
“ him, the chancellor, counsellors, mas-
“ ters of the requests, parliament officers,
“ treasurers, masters, keepers and officers
“ of the mints, to observe this present re-
“ gulation for ever. If it happens that
“ any one of them should dare to advise to
“ the contrary, he shall be immediately
“ stript of his office, and held incapable
“ of exercising any other for the future.

“ 4. He promises to root out all the clip-
“ pers and filers of foreign coins: never-
“ theless, reserving to himself the power
“ of putting an end to their currency in
“ the kingdom, and renewing the pro-
“ hibition of the exportation of specie and
“ bullion.

“ 5. Pro-

Letter
IX.

“ 5. Promises to put a stop for the future to all seizures of wines, provisions, victuals, carts, and other things taken by his officers, of whatsoever condition they be, by his children and relations; reserving to his person only the right of taking tables, trellis, benches, and cushions, threshed beans for the service of his house, and the necessary carriages, paying for them the same day, or the next at farthest; in failure of which payment, the takers shall be liable to be sued before the provost of the *Hotel*, or the judge of the place where the capture was made.

“ 6. Whereas the said captures are frequent in the kingdom, and that too much pains cannot be taken in order to root out that practice, he authorizes all persons to resist it, and permits them to call their neighbours to their assistance, and the commons of the nearest towns: orders that such as attempt the like practices shall be pursued, seized, and punished as vagabonds, thieves, and ravishers: that no judge shall set them at liberty, or abate above a fourth part of the fine laid upon them; but that they shall be condemned with all rigour, without consideration and privilege of exemption, or attribution of justice; authorizing all judges to try them: and
“ in



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LET-

“ in default of plaintiffs, the king’s at- Letter
“ torney-general shall be bound by oath IX.
“ to prosecute the delinquents with all
“ possible rigour. ~~~~~

“ 7. He will have the queen, the duke
“ of *Normandy* his eldest son, his other
“ children, the lords his relations, and
“ his officers, swear to cause this article to
“ be put in execution; and that it be pub-
“ lished in all the bailiwicks and senescha-
“ lies of the kingdom, as often as honest
“ men shall require it.

“ 8. Forbids any creditor to cede or
“ make over his debt to one more power-
“ ful than himself, to the king’s officers,
“ the lords, or privileged persons; or-
“ dering that the concessioners shall lose
“ their debt, and be condemned to pay
“ an arbitrary fine.

“ 9. He orders the prescription of all
“ the debts of the *Lombards* (that is to
“ say the * *Traitans*) beyond the term of
“ ten years: forbids them to adjourn a-
“ ny of their debtors out of their natural
“ courts of justice; and in case the con-
“ trary should happen, gives leave to the
“ latter not to appear to their summons.

“ 10. He orders that all jurisdiction be
“ left for the future to the judges in or-

* *Men who farmed particular taxes, contracted for
furnishing provisions or stores; also money-lenders,
usurers, &c.*

Letter IX. " dinary, without permitting any per-
 " son to be summoned hereafter before
 " the * *Maitres d'Hotel*, or their lieute-
 " nants, the constables, marshals, ad-
 " mirals, and justices in eyre: preserving,
 " nevertheless, the jurisdiction of the
 " master of the requests over the officers
 " of his household, in their own cause, as
 " defendant, and not as plaintiff: that
 " of the constable over the serjeants at
 " arms when defendants: that of the
 " marshals of *France* and their lieute-
 " nants, in what relates to war; and that
 " of the justices in eyre in what belongs to
 " to their province only.

" 11. He forbids the justices in eyre to
 " assume to themselves the cognizance of
 " matters relating to hunting, fishing,
 " or other misdemeanors in the jurisdic-
 " tion of the lords; and in case of contra-
 " vention in them, he permits the refu-
 " sal of obedience to their orders.

" 12. He forbids all dukes, counts,
 " barons, and other nobles, to enlarge
 " the antient warrens; and gives liberty
 " to destroy all those established since his
 " father's reign, and during his own.

" 13. He reduces the fees of the ser-
 " jeants, who served several executions

* *A court then something resembling our board of
 green-cloth.*

" in

“ in a day, to the tax of one day ; and Letter
“ condemns them under pain of imprison- IX.
“ ment, to make restitution of the over-
“ plus they exacted.

“ 14. He forbids to employ any as
“ serjeants, but such as enjoy fiefs of in-
“ heritance, upon pain of losing their
“ office.

“ 15. As the king formerly made a
“ charter of regulation for the labourers,
“ by which they are liable to certain fines
“ in the cases expressed in it, he declares
“ that he has not pretended to adjudge
“ the said fines to himself, in the lands of
“ the lords to whom they belong by
“ right.

“ 16. He forbids in general, all offi-
“ cers of his household, or of judicature,
“ and even the officers of the lords, to
“ traffick either by themselves, or under
“ the name, and in company with ano-
“ ther, under penalty of forfeiting the
“ merchandize.

“ 17. He pardons, in consideration of
“ the aid granted by the states, all of-
“ fences which might have been com-
“ mitted against the ordinances on the
“ coin, except the exportation of specie
“ out of the kingdom, and false coining.
“ He likewise annuls all letters of state
“ and respite.

C 2

“ 18. He

Letter

IX.

“ 18. He declares that for the future,
 “ he will not convoke the *arriere-ban*
 “ without evident necessity, and without
 “ the advice of the deputies of the three
 “ estates; if, however, it be possible for
 “ him to require it.

“ 19. He agrees, that while the pre-
 “ sent aid lasts, all other subsidies shall
 “ cease; because, if unfortunately the
 “ war should not end in the course of the
 “ year, the states, who are to assemble
 “ within that time, will provide a new aid
 “ suitable to the circumstances of affairs;
 “ and likewise in case of another war,
 “ the states should also provide other suf-
 “ ficient aids, by deliberation of the three
 “ orders, without any one of the three be-
 “ ing bound or engaged by the votes of
 “ the other two; and if the three orders
 “ cannot agree, nothing shall be deter-
 “ mined: but in such a case, the king
 “ may have recourse to his domains, and
 “ his other rights; except the fact of sei-
 “ zures already mentioned, which he
 “ shall never do without paying the just
 “ value of them.

“ 20. As the necessities of the war ren-
 “ der sufficient precautions absolutely
 “ necessary to be taken, he forbids the
 “ making of *false musters*, under the pe-
 “ nalty of confiscation of arms and hor-
 “ ses, and arbitrary punishment.

“ 21. He

“ 21. He orders, that to prevent false Letter
 “ musters, the states super-intendants de- IX.
 “ puties shall be present at the reviews in
 “ conjunction with the captains appoint-
 “ ed by the king: that nobody shall be
 “ believed upon his own word, not even
 “ the lords of the *Flower de Luces*: that
 “ nothing shall be paid but to those who
 “ are really present in arms and equi-
 “ page: that the horses shall be marked,
 “ in order to avoid any over-reaching: and
 “ that every man capable of bearing arms,
 “ shall be forbid to absent himself from
 “ the kingdom during the present war,
 “ without the king’s express leave. In
 “ fine, that as to the pay of the men at
 “ arms, they shall receive it from the
 “ pay-masters appointed by the states, and
 “ not by any other ways or means what-
 “ soever.

“ 22. The king forbids any of his of-
 “ ficers, admirals, constables, masters of
 “ the cross-bow-men, treasurers of war,
 “ or others, to take any duty from those
 “ who shall make incursions, or go out
 “ cruizing upon the enemy, to the end
 “ that the whole profit may belong to
 “ those that gained it: orders, that if the
 “ hired foreigners to be employed in this
 “ war, shall commit any disorder in the
 “ places they pass through, it shall be
 “ lawful to resist them; and that the cap-
 “ tains

Letter " tains be answerable for their troops, up-
 IX. " on this condition, nevertheless, that
 " the towns shall be obliged to furnish
 " them with provisions for their money.

" 23. The king forbids troops upon
 " their march to stay above a day in the
 " places where they halt: gives leave to
 " refuse them provisions beyond that
 " term; and even to constrain them to
 " set forward, if any should delay, with-
 " out a lawful excuse known to the ma-
 " gistrates. Moreover, he promises to
 " prosecute the war vigorously both by
 " sea and land, in order to bring it soon-
 " er to an end, and not to make any
 " peace or truce with the enemy but by
 " the advice of the three estates.

" 24. The king orders all men to be
 " in arms upon the first *ban* that shall be
 " made, under pain of being forced to it
 " by his officers, or by the lords justifi-
 " ciaries, who for that purpose shall be
 " provided with royal letters, for which
 " nothing shall be paid to the chancery.

" In fine, those letters conclude with a
 " clause derogating from all contrary sta-
 " tutes, practices, and customs, even
 " from all former ordinances. The king,
 " from his own certain knowledge, spe-
 " cial favour, royal power and authority,
 " *willing* and commanding that all his
 " officers and justices do observe and exe-
 " cute

“cute them, cause them to be observed Letter
 “and executed in every particular, ac- IX.
 “cording to the form and contents there-
 “of. Given at *Paris*, under the great
 “seal, the twenty-third of *December*,
 “1355, and published in judgment at
 “the *Chatelet* of *Paris*, the twenty-
 “second of *January* following.

The states having assembled in the month of *March*, according to their pro-
 rogation, a great number of the deputies of *Normandy* and *Picardy* were missing: this shewed little disposition in those provinces to concur in the end proposed; and the cause of it was immediately imputed to the king of *Navarre*, who had not ceased his caballing, and was suspected of holding a correspondence with the *English*. Nevertheless, the members of the states present in the assembly, having examined the produce of the aid, and found that a great many places had refused to submit to it, concluded to grant a capitation according to the king's first demand; which was fixed at four *livres* for every 100 *livres* of rent, in respect of all persons of the royal line, ecclesiasticks, nobles, barons, plebeians, without exemption of any person on account of privilege, and the pretended right of birth, or any other cause whatever: meaning, nevertheless, that only two *livres* should be paid for every 100

The states grant a general capitation or poll-tax to the king.

Letter *livres* exceeding the sum of 1000; and
 IX. from 100 *l.* down to forty, only two
 pounds should be paid, and twenty *sols* for
 any sum under. But what rendered this
 tax more rigorous, was, that labourers,
 workmen, and even domesticks, were sub-
 ject to it, and rated at ten *sols* in propor-
 tion to 100 *sols* wages or income. An
 estimate was likewise made of the furni-
 ture of houses, in order to join it to that
 of the rents; so that a person whose
 household goods were worth 1000 *livres*,
 was rated upon a par with him that had
 100 *livres* income; and if his furniture
 was worth more, his tax was raised in
 proportion. Most of the sittings of those
 states were held at the castle of *Ruelle* near
Nanterre; but we have not the originals,
 at least to my knowledge. While they
 were assembled, the commons of *Artois*
 began the prelude of the general revolt,
 which broke out soon after.

He sur-
 prizes the
 king of
 Navarre,
 and cau-
 ses four
 lords of
 his reti-
 nue to be
 beheaded.

However, the most important event of
 that time, was the surprizing the king of
Navarre, and his principal friends; who,
 being at dinner with the duke of *Norman-*
dy in the castle of *Rouen*, were taken as it
 were in a trap, by the sudden arrival of
 the king, who caused four of them to be
 beheaded the same day, without any form
 of trial; viz. the count of *Harcourt*, the
 lord of *Graville*, the lord *Maubue de Men-*
nemarres,

nemarres, and *Oliver Doublet*, esquires. Letter

The king of *Navarre* was carried away prisoner. I must remark here, that fa-

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ther *Daniel* has affected so improper a negligence in regard to the family names, that he seems to have endeavoured, on this occasion, to palm upon us a christian name for a surname, having contented himself with saying that the king caused two esquires, called *Maubue* and *Doublet*, to be beheaded along with the count of *Harcourt*, as if the first name was a surname as well as the second: he might perhaps say, that he did it only with a view of sparing the house of *Mennemarres* the shame of an executed person, were it not evident, on the other hand, that all the families who had the misfortune to feel the effects of king *John's* wrath, have not been in the least dishonoured by it: in fact, this is but an example of that remissness which I take notice of by the bye, among five hundred more of greater importance, which I could quote. This execution, which was looked upon as a treachery in the duke of *Normandy*, and an inhuman violence in the king, made the whole province revolt. The king, who would himself conduct his prisoner to a secure place, having afterwards attempted to re-enter that province with troops, found all the towns shut against him; some of them called

Letter called in the *English*, who made a descent
 IX. in the *Cotantin*, while the prince of *Wales*
 having pierced through *Berry*, came and
 fell upon *Touraine*. The king, though
 he had a formidable army, yet not know-
 ing then which side to turn to, resolved
 at last to pursue the prince of *Wales*, be-
 cause there was no necessity of undertaking
 any sieges in order to attack him: besides
 which, it seemed to be an easy matter to
 starve him, on account of his not being
 master of any strong place. Neverthe-
 less, the king was so imprudent as to haz-
 ard a battle, which he lost in so fatal a
 manner, that he was taken prisoner, and
 soon after carried over to *England*: a vast
 number of lords fell in that battle, and a
 great many were taken prisoners: so that
France in this deplorable condition was
 really upon the point of being conquered
 by the *English*, if the wisdom and conduct
 of the dauphin duke of *Normandy*, the
 king's eldest son, had not rescued her from
 so great a misfortune. The battle was
 fought the 19th of *September*, and the dau-
 phin came back to *Paris* ten days after,
 where he immediately convoked the three
 estates to meet the 15th of *October* follow-
 ing, in order to consult together about the
 king's deliverance, and the means to pre-
 serve the kingdom.

The Eng-
 lish in-
 vade
 France,
 and take
 the king
 prisoner.

The dau-
 phin con-
 vokes the
 three e-
 states.

If

If ever concord and union were necessary, it was upon such an occasion : but the king, who during his prosperity behaved himself in a manner capable to drive the people to despair, had so alienated the hearts and good-will of his subjects, that most of the deputies that repaired to the assembly, came with a premeditated design to labour, preferably to all other things, towards reforming the government, and setting strong bounds to despotick authority, which had never produced any other effect but the ruin of the kingdom, and the king himself. The first sitting was held in the parliament-hall, on *Monday the 17th of October*; where the dauphin, by the mouth of the chancellor, archbishop of *Rouen*, set forth the great disgrace that had happened to *France*; upon which it was necessary that the states should give him aid and advice, as well for procuring the king's speedy deliverance, as for governing the kingdom, and carrying on the war during his absence. The three estates answered, *viz.* the clergy by the mouth of *John de Craon*, archbishop of *Rheims*; the noblesse by *Philip* duke of *Orleans*, the king's brother; and the cities by *Stephen Marcel*, provost of the merchants of *Paris*, that they demanded a delay, in order to assemble and deliberate about the matter; which being granted to them,

And demands their advice and assistance.

Answer and behaviour of the states.

Letter them, the dauphin appointed several of

IX. the king's counsel to assist in the private assemblies, which were held in the convent of *Cordeliers*. But the second day the states complained to the dauphin, that the presence of the king's counsellors hindered the freedom of their debates, demanding that they should abstain from coming amongst them; which was immediately granted, but not without some distrust of the intentions of the states. The sittings continued eight days together without any resolution being formed, until they agreed to chuse fifty deputies out of the three orders, for drawing up a plan of reformation in conjunction with that of the war and finances. When this plan was concluded by consent of the states, the elected sent to acquaint the dauphin that they desired to communicate certain private affairs to him, and therefore prayed him to come to their assembly; which he did, along with five attendants. They then declared to him, that after a long and difficult work, they had at last agreed upon several articles, which being desirous to communicate to him, they thought themselves obliged to demand his secrecy, and his concurrence to the common advantage. The dauphin, already filled with the idea of his own authority, in quality of lieutenant to the king his father, answered, that he did

did not pretend to oblige himself to secrecy, and much less to the approbation of what might be contrary to the king's authority: upon which the elected, having debated among themselves, thought it, however, not less necessary in them to communicate their unanimous resolutions to him, in order to endeavour to obtain his consent, without which there could be no union, or mutual correspondence.

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They therefore declared, by the mouth of *Robert le Cocq*, bishop of *Laon*, 1. " That
" the kingdom having been formerly very ill-governed, they judged it was
" through the fault and evil counsels of
" those whom the king had employed ;
" wherefore they required, that all the
" king's officers in general should be deprived, or suspended from their employments: that the dauphin should imprison the persons, and seize the effects and
" revenues belonging to those of whom
" they intended to give in a list ; that
" their revenues should from thenceforth
" be deemed forfeited, and as such, after
" an inventory made of them, applied
" towards the expences of the war ; that
" as to their persons, their trials should
" be made and perfected upon the accusations, and the articles which the elected
" of the states should exhibit against them
" before impartial commissioners : and,
" whereas

Representations of the states.

Letter " whereas the chancellor, the first of those
 IX. " whom they complained of, was an ec-
 ~~~~~ " clestiastick, they desired the dauphin to  
 " write a letter to the pope with his own  
 " hand, in order to obtain commissioners  
 " at the option of the states, who should  
 " be authoriz'd to pronounce a definitive  
 " sentence against him. The list of the  
 " persons accused, containing twenty-two  
 " in number, included besides *Peter de la*  
 " *Forest* chancellor, *Simon de Bussi* first  
 " president of the parliament, *Robert de*  
 " *Lory* the king's chamberlain, *John Cha-*  
 " *melart* and *Peter Dorgemont*, presidents  
 " in the parliament; *Nicolas Braque* the  
 " king's *maitre d'hotel*, formerly his trea-  
 " surer; *John Poilvilain*, master of the  
 " mints; *Enguerrand du Petit*, and *Ber-*  
 " *nard de Fremont*, treasurers of France;  
 " *John Chauneau* and *James Lempereur*,  
 " treasurers of war; *Stephen de Paris*,  
 " *Peter de la Charité*, and *Ancel Cho-*  
 " *quart*, masters of the requests of the  
 " parliament; *John Turpin*, counsellor of  
 " the requests of the parliament; *Robert*  
 " *Despreaux*, the king's notary; *John Das-*  
 " *si*, the king's advocate in the parliament;  
 " *John d'Auxere* master, of the accounts;  
 " *John de Brebaigne*, valet de chambre;  
 " *le Borgne de Beauffe* master of the  
 " horse, *Geofroy le Maxurier* butler, all  
 " three the dauphin's officers; and, in fine,  
 " the



“ the *Abbé de Falaize* president of the Letter  
“ enquêtes of the parliament. IX.

“ 2. They demanded, that reforming  
“ commissioners, to be chosen by the states,  
“ and authorized by express commissions,  
“ should be sent into the provinces, in or-  
“ der to bring all prevaricating officers to  
“ a definitive trial.

“ 3. That the coin should be restored  
“ according as the states should order it.

“ 4. That the dauphin would be plea-  
“ sed to compose his council of twenty-  
“ eight counsellors, who should be nomi-  
“ nated by the states, *viz.* four prelates,  
“ twelve knights, and as many citizens ;  
“ who should have the administration of  
“ all affairs in their hands, with the right  
“ of filling up all vacant employments,  
“ and even divesting those who were or  
“ might be in possession of them ; the  
“ whole to be decided by plurality of  
“ votes.

“ 5. They demanded the releasement of  
“ the king of *Navarre*, which the dau-  
“ phin himself had an interest to grant  
“ for his own justification, and which he  
“ ought to acknowledge to be agreeable  
“ in the sight of God, since nothing but  
“ misfortunes had happened to the king-  
“ dom from the time of his confinement,  
“ and the murders committed as *Rouen*”.

*John*

Letter IX. *John de Pequigny* knight spoke for the noblesse, *Nicholas le Chanteur* advocate, and *Stephen Marcel* provost of the merchants of *Paris*, spoke for the third estate and the deputies of the good substantial towns: concluding for the necessity of a good union, which, considering what had been done formerly, could not be firm and lasting but by the execution of their demands.

*The dauphin's answer.*

The dauphin suffered such harsh propositions with great uneasiness. Nevertheless, he answered in person, that the nature of them required a long examination, and that he would advise with his council about the matter; but, first, he would be very glad to know what offers and assistance the states would give him in the present unhappy situation of affairs.

*The states oblige themselves to maintain 30,000 men at arms.*

The elected of the states then replied, and told him, that by means of what they demanded, they offered to maintain for the service of the king and dauphin, 30,000 men at arms, at the rate of half a florin of a crown for each; and that, in order to raise a fund for that expence, the clergy and nobles should pay one tenth and a half of their revenue, that is to say, fifteen *livres* in a hundred; and that in the cities, towns, and the open country, every hundred families should pay and arm a man at arms. And, nevertheless, as they could not

not exactly know the produce of such a Letter tax, they demanded that their assembly IX. might be prorogued, either to the week before or after *Easter*, to the end, that upon examining the accounts, they might make good any deficiency on the principal sum necessary, for the payment of the 30,000 men at arms which they would maintain. This conference being over, the dauphin retired to the palace, after having given his word to return a speedy answer; which was, nevertheless, put off for several days, by reason of the great diversity of opinions in the council, most of whom were negotiating with the states, in order to obtain some abatement of the excessive demands they had made. But their firmness being such that they would not give up any thing on the points of government, the majority of votes in the council determined the dauphin to grant every thing, and to pitch upon the eve of *All-Saints-Day* for declaring it. This, however, was so far from being his own private opinion, that the day was no sooner appointed but he was sorry for what he had done, and sought means to break off the appointment: being persuaded by those who were in greatest favour with him, that the fund proposed by the states would hardly suffice for the pay of between eight and nine thousand men at arms,



Letter and that by granting their demands, besides the prejudice that would result to the royal authority, he did the greatest injury he could possibly commit against the king his father. But the most singular circumstance of all, is that the council having assembled again, in order to deliberate on these new considerations, they unanimously agreed to break off the day, and conclude nothing with the states. Conformable to that revolution, the dauphin went to the gates of the palace, where all the people and the states were assembled, and from thence having sent for three deputies of each order, who were, for the clergy, the archbishops of *Lyons* and *Rheims*, and the bishop of *Laon*; for the noblesse, *Valerant de Luxembourg*, the sire of *Conflans* marshal of *Champagne*, and *John de Pecquigny* governor of *Artois*; and for the third estate, *Stephen Marcel* provost of the merchants, *Charles Confac* alderman, and *Nicolas le Chanteur* advocate, all three of the city of *Paris*. He represented to them, that he could not grant any thing without express orders from the king his father, and the advice of the emperor of the *Romans* his uncle; for which reasons he demanded that that day might be put off to the *Thursday* following. But tho' it was evident that the dauphin had other views, which he was not disposed to make known, the

the duke of *Orleans* his uncle spoke so well Letter  
to the people present, that every body re- IX.  
tired without sedition or tumult. The  
next day after the feast of *All-Saints*, the  
dauphin held a grand council at the *Lou-*  
*vre*, where a few deputies of the states *And dis-*  
having been ordered to attend, he declared *solves the*  
to them, that their business was to return *assembly.*  
to their respective homes, until the news  
expected from the king his father was ar-  
rived. Upon this order, the states assem-  
bled the 3d of *November*, in the convent of  
the *Cordeliers*, concluded, that since they  
had been convoked by the dauphin, duke of  
*Normandy*, in order to give him aid and  
counsel in the adversity of the king his  
father, and that having deliberated upon  
the two articles so far, that they formed  
an unanimous resolution, which had been  
communicated to him, and he had accept-  
ed, so that a day had been fixed in order  
to render an ordinance conformable there-  
to, at which day he afterwards declined  
being present upon certain pretexts ; it was  
necessary that every member of the three  
orders should carry home into his own  
country an act of the resolution of the  
states, in order to shew that it was not  
their fault if the kingdom was not sus-  
tained and assisted in such an extremity.  
Notwithstanding all that I relate here upon  
the authority of the great chronicle, it is

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certain that the states re-assembled at *Paris* the 5th of *February* following; and that after several debates, the dauphin caused an ordinance to be drawn up conformable to their first resolution, the original of which is in the king's library. Nevertheless, the chronicle says not a word of this second assembly, tho' afterwards it alludes to it on several occasions. Here follows the extract of that ordinance of the dauphin, which is dated in *March* 1356, registered in parliament the 3d of the month, and in the *Chatelet* the 30th.

*Extract  
of the or-  
dinance  
made by  
the dau-  
phin in a  
second as-  
sembly in  
order to  
pacify the  
people.*

CHARLES, eldest son and lieutenant to the king of *France*, duke of *Normandy*, dauphin of *Vienne*, signifies to all present and to come, &c. The preamble contains the mandate pursuant to which the states were assembled, in order to give counsel, and act both for the king's deliverance and the defence of the kingdom. He therein acknowledges the great disorders happened in the state through neglect of the service of God, the honour due to the church, and the administration of justice, by the prevarications of the officers, justices, and others; but chiefly by the avarice, covetousness, and ambition of evil counsellors, who, without any regard to the publick welfare, have only studied how to enrich themselves, their families, their



their friends, and their creatures : for which reason no reformation can be expected, but by turning out for ever those perfidious counsellors and administrators, without any hopes of ever being restored, and filling their places with good, prudent, wise, sincere, diligent, loyal men. Wherefore, 1. He irrevocably *wills*, that what shall be ordained by him and the deputies of the three estates, concerning the aid, the reformation, and the coin, shall be generally held and observed ; and that the officers hereafter named, shall remain for ever deprived of their employments, without a possibility of being restored to them.

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2. As it has formerly happened, that the produce of the aids, *gabelles*, and subsidies granted for the expences of the war, have been perverted to other uses under divers pretexts, *wills*, that all that shall be levied for that purpose be applied to the expences of the war, solely by those commissioned by the said states, to whom these presents shall be a sufficient power. Renounces both for himself, and the king his father, the taking or diverting any part of the said sums ; orders that no regard be had to any contrary letters which they might grant through importunity ; permits the commissioners to resist by force those that shall attempt to take their mo-

Letter nies under any pretext ; promises to make  
 IX. the lords his relations, as likewise the great  
 officers of the crown, swear that they will  
 never take, or pretend to any part of those  
 sums.

3. He consents and grants, at the request of the states, that their commissioners and deputies shall not do or conclude any thing, if they be not all agreed together.

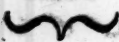
4. He renounces, during the course of the aid granted by the states, all other sorts of subsidies, *gabelles*, duties upon drinks or merchandize, tenths which might be granted by the pope on the clergy, and even any loan from any persons of the three estates whatsoever.

5. Whereas war is an important and difficult affair, and that too much care cannot be taken to provide for it, he orders, that the three estates shall re-assemble at *Paris* on the *Monday* after *Low-Sunday*, or in any other place they think proper, with power to augment, diminish, alter, or do whatever they please concerning the aid granted by them ; and they are likewise impowered to meet again twice during the course of the year, in order to provide for any events that might happen ; and the votes of the three estates shall be so free, that those of any two orders

orders shall not be able to bind the third, Letter  
unless by its own consent. IX.

The 6th article promises entire redress of grievances in the following manner : 1. Revokes all reprieves and pardons granted to murderers, assassins, ravishers of maidens or women, incendiaries, church-plunderers, truce-breakers, security-breakers, and infringers of safe-conducts. Declares, that he will never grant remission for such crimes ; and if he should do it, his intention is, that no obedience be paid to him in that respect. 2. *Wills*, that the officers of justice do execute good and speedy justice, without consuming the parties by delays ; blames the parliament for their negligence, and some presidents for male practices in their functions. 3. Forbids all manner of sale of the offices of judicature, and likewise the hiring a person to discharge the duty of them, a thing which was then practised ; and for greater precaution, orders that no person shall be qualified to exercise any act of judicature in the country where he was born, and possesses any estate. 4. He forbids all manner of composition in case of crime, under pain of loss of jurisdiction ; and will have justice fully executed. 5. *Wills*, that the causes depending before the parliament be determined in their turn on the roll, and according to the order of the presentations.



Letter 6. As justice cannot be administer'd but  
IX. by good and loyal officers, he declares,  
 that he divests, as unworthy of all offices, the twenty-two persons above-mentioned, at the head of whom is the chancellor lately made a cardinal. 7. He regulates the tax of the commissaries of the parliament, who are obliged to go into the provinces. 8. He orders that the chamber of account shall be reformed, for the dispatch of the parties; acknowledging the abuses committed in it, as well on account of the wages extraordinary which the officers draw from the king, as by the excessive fees attributed to them, and the great number of useless officers, who dispatch no manner of business. Wherefore his *will* is, that they remain deprived of their employments, reserving to himself to provide other persons in their room who shall behave better. 9. He orders that provision shall likewise be made, by an express ordinance, for nominating the persons to hold the chambers of the parliament, and fixing the number of notaries, secretaries, serjeants, serjeants at arms, who shall be bound to behave well and duly in their respective stations, under pain of being deprived of their employments. 10. He orders, that for the direction of the mints, skilful, wise, and loyal men shall be established by the advice of the  
three

three estates, by whose orders money shall be coined according to the course, value, and standard approved by the three estates; pursuant to which shall be coined pieces of fine gold of thirty *sols* each, and fifty-two of these pieces to the mark, and other white and \* black moneys in proportion: promises to look upon as a traitor and evil-doer, whoever shall advise him to weaken and debase the said coins. 11. Forbids, on the same terms with those of the ordinance of 1355, the taking of provisions and carriages from the people. 12. Permits resistance against those who shall employ force for making the said seizures, and subjects them to justice. 13. Regulates the fees of notaries, confirms the attribution of the seal of the *chatelet*, and forbids the augmenting of fines beyond the custom of each place.

By the 7th article, the dauphin orders, that those who have levied and collected the aids granted by the states, shall bring in their accounts, in every diocese, before the commissioners of the states, who shall diligently enquire into the receipt and application of them, to the end, that upon their report, the states may provide accordingly against the next day after *Low-Sunday*.

\* *Brass and Copper Coin.*

By

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Letter IX. By the 8th, he regulates the payments made in bad money.

By the 9th, he forbids the practice of ceding or making over debts to powerful persons, in order to vex and oppress the debtors.

The 10th provides for the preservation of particular jurisdictions against the attempts of the king's officers.

By the 11th, he forbids the encroachments of the king's justices in eyre upon the particular lordships.

In the 12th he forbids the extension of the antient warrens, and the establishment of new ones.

By the 13th, he forbids all judges to exercise more than one office by themselves, or to commission another to do it for them at their own profit.

By the 14th all surreptitious commissions are annihilated.

By the 15th a reform of the too great number of serjeants is promised, and provision made for their expences.

The 16th forbids the exercising of serjeantships by commission, except they be feoffed and hereditary serjeantships.

By the 17th, the salary of serjeants is reduced to eight *sols per diem*, and that of the huiffiers of the parliament to sixteen : *wills*, that for the future no serjeant shall be received without giving sufficient security



rity, for his behaviour, for the fines, damages, and costs he may be liable to. Letter IX.

By the 18th, all officers of justices are forbid to trade, or cause others to trade for them. ~~~~~

By the 19th, he forgives the past non-appearances of the *arrier-bans* published, and promises not to publish them any more, without evident necessity, and the advice of the states.

By the 20th, he forbids all nobles and men at arms to be absent from the kingdom, without leave from the sovereign; and this, as long as the war continues.

By the 21st, he forbids all nobles to make any private wars during the general war.

By the 22d, permission is given to cruize or make incursions upon the enemy, without paying any duty on account of the profit which may arise from them.

The 23d forbids the treasurers of war to take above twelve *deniers* for their dispatches.

By the 24th, all soldiers are forbid to use any violence, or to plunder in the cities, towns, or villages of the kingdom, under pain of the rope.

By the 25th, the stay of troops in any one place, during their march, is fixed to a whole day.

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In the 26th, he promises to make neither peace nor truce with the enemy, but by the advice of the three estates.

By the 27th, it is ordered, that all men be armed, or constrained to arm themselves, by the officers of the places, that they may be assisting in the present war.

By the 28th, he promises to preserve the domain, and to revoke all that has been alienated from it since the reign of *Philip the Fair*, except what has been given to God and the churches, or what has been dismembered for relations of the royal blood of *France*, and given for portions to princeesses.

The 29th and 30th contain regulations concerning the grand council.

By the 31st, it is ordered, that the chancellor shall trouble himself with nothing but the affairs of the great seal, the regulation of justice, and likewise the establishment of the employments which belong to his office.

The 32d forbids the chancellor to seal any letters of alienation of domains, or rights of the crown, grants, fines, or confiscation for forfeiture, under pain of nullity.

The 33d orders, that no useless people shall be employed any longer in the requests of the king's hotel, but in their room

room shall be put good and loyal men, four clerks, and two laymen, who have been nominated by the advice of the states, and they shall exercise jurisdiction in the same manner as was practised in the time of *Philip the Fair*.

Letter  
IX.

By the 34th, all officers approaching the king's person, are forbid to request grants, favours, remissions, or institutions of their creatures to any posts or employments; but, if they have any demand to make, they shall do it at the king's publick audience, and during the king's grand council: and to this they shall swear upon the holy evangelists.

By the 35th, all persons possessing employments in the king's hotel or council, are forbid to make any confederacy for gaining certain ends, under pain of being deprived of their employments.

By the 36th, in order to give good example, he will have his household, and those of the lords related to him, brought under a good regulation; and that they pay exactly for the necessary provisions they take in: the whole to be administered by wise and faithful persons.

By the 37th, on the complaint of the three estates, that a bad construction and consequence has been drawn from the king's ordinance, containing that the debts of the *Lombards* shall remain proscribed for  
ten



Letter ten years, which has occasioned greater  
 IX. vexations than before ; the dauphin's will  
 is, that all pursuits against the *Lombards*  
 shall remain suspended, and stop until the  
 day after next *Low-Sunday*.

By the 38th, he declares, that the precedent aid, granted by the states, shall cause no prejudice to any person, nor to the liberties, franchises and privileges belonging to them, according to the general charters of reformation of the kingdom granted by *Louis X.*

By the 39th, the dauphin takes under his own and the king's special protection, all and every one of the members of the three estates, against those who bear them ill-will, officers and others, whom they complain of ; and for their greater security, allows a right to every one of them to cause himself to be attended, wheresoever he travels in any part of the kingdom, by six armed men for his defence, without being liable to any obstruction from any judge whatever, on account of carrying arms.

By the 40th, on the remonstrance that the inferior judges, whose judgments are subject to appeals, delay and refuse giving judgment through fear of the fines they incur in case they pass a wrong sentence; the dauphin orders, that they shall not be fined above sixty *livres*, except it appears that

that they have been guilty of corruption and malpractices, in which case they shall be punished according to the mis-  
deed. Letter IX.

By the 41st, the dauphin abolishes the practice of oaths in cases of *essoïn*, that is to say, excuses for non-appearance; because the said oaths are generally light, if not false.

By the 42d, he forbids the provosts to include in quarrels persons who had no hand in them; *willing* the peaceable people be not disturbed.

By the 43d, he orders the revision of all the charters and favours granted since the 5th of last *February*, and which shall be granted for the future.

By the 44th, he permits defence, even in ringing the \* *toxin*, against those that shall attempt any violence.

By the 45th, the captains and governors of places are ordered to provide for their security.

By the 46th, he forbids appeals to the parliament from the judgments given in the inferior courts of justice: however, his *will* is, that if the parliament has got the appeal, it may be in the power of those who hold it, to keep back the cause, in case they think it best to do so; but

\**The allarm or fire-bell.*

Letter he leaves that to their own conscience,  
 IX. not being willing to wrong the middle judicature.

By the 47th article, he forbids all letters of respite against a lawful debt, and will have no obedience paid to them in case any be granted.

In fine, this charter concludes with the usual clauses and injunctions for rendering the execution of it perpetual. Signed in the margin by the grand council, in which were the archbishop of *Rheims*, the bishops of *Paris*, *Langres*, *Nevers*, *Laon*, *Therouanne*, the abbot of *St. Denis*; the dukes of *Orleans* and *Bretagne*; the counts of *Alençon*, *Roan*, *Etampes*, *Rouffy*; the grand prior of *Aquitaine*; the lords of *Milan*, *Garencieres*, *Loupy*; Messieurs *John de Pequigny*, *William d'Ambleville*, *Philip de Trois Noms*, and several others.

*The king  
 traverses  
 the dau-  
 phin's  
 measures.*

But while they were labouring in *Paris* towards establishing an order suitable to the misfortunes of *France*, the king, still a slave to his own imperious temper, thought of nothing but traversing so great and so fine a work, which he looked upon as a condemnation of all that he had done himself during his administration: he began by concluding a truce with the *English* for two years, from *Easter-Sunday* then approaching: it was published at  
*Paris*



*Paris* on *Maundy-Thursday*, with the letters parents of the said prince, forbidding to levy the aid granted by the states, and revoking the permission they had obtained to re-assemble on *Low-Sunday*, and other days appointed. This news put the people in a great ferment, by discovering the evil intentions which the king seemed to have towards them. Nevertheless, the dauphin, who was better advised, did not hinder the deputies of the states from taking their seats in his grand council, nor the general reformers from exercising their functions until the month of *July* following; though the credit of the states seemed to be declining, by reason that the produce of the aids fell very short of answering the ends proposed. The dauphin improved that advantage; gained over some of the deputies to his side, among whom was the archbishop of *Rheims*, and forbade the rest to trouble their heads with the government. Nevertheless, as the receivers of the states were masters of the money, the court was quickly obliged to compound with them, and consent to their assembling the 7th of *November* then next ensuing, of the year 1357. That very day the king of *Navarre* escaped out of prison: after which coming to *Paris*, the question was no longer about the good of the state, but his particular pretensions, which soon pro-

*The king of Navarre escapes out of prison, and raises seditions.*

Letter IX. duced seditions ; so that there was no more order or measures kept, and nothing was put in execution of all that had been so well concerted, and so solemnly promised.

*The dauphin gets the nobleſſe in his intereſt, and renders them odious to the people.*

The ſtates aſſembled, nevertheless, in the month of *January* the ſame year ; but the *nobleſſe* appeared neither in that meeting, nor in thoſe which they had in the month of *February* following. This was owing to the dauphin's policy, who gained the lords by all manner of careſſes, while he privately raiſed ſuſpicions in the cities againſt them, by cauſing it to be repreſented to the inhabitants, that nothing but the royal authority could ſet bounds to the violence to which they were accuſtomed ; and he ſucceeded ſo well in his inſinuations, that the cities and the *nobleſſe* equally neglected to unite and act in concert together for the common good ; in ſuch ſort, that the former openly preferred the ſecurity they expected to find in repairing their walls and ditches, to that which would have been the effect of agreement, and a good underſtanding between them. This diſpoſition of the nation immediately ſerved to determine the dauphin to take upon himſelf the name and authority of regent of the kingdom, which it ſeems the ſtates would not grant him before : and in conſequence the king's name was taken out of all the acts, and the

*He aſſumes the title of regent.*

the regent's put in its place; the use of Letter  
the seal of the *Chatelet* was likewise laid IX.  
aside, which had served since the king's  
confinement, and the regent's new seal  
substituted in the room of it. This event  
happened the 14th of *March* 1357.

Soon after, the regent, who could not *Convokes*  
relish general deliberations, which always *private*  
tended to some diminution of absolute *assemblies*  
power, but nevertheless wanted money,  
resolved to hold particular assemblies. He  
convoked the states of *Champagne* at *Ver-*  
*tus*, and those of *Picardy* at *Compeigne*,  
with some small success: this made him  
bold enough to adjourn the states-general *And a*  
to *Compiegne*, though according to the *general*  
terms of the prorogation, they ought to *one at*  
have assembled at *Paris*. The effect of *Com-*  
this change was to intimidate that capital, *piegne.*  
and get an aid granted to the regent: but  
the states retained on this occasion, as they  
had done at *Paris*, the receipt and dispo-  
sition of their money, in order to prevent  
the dissipation of it. After that, it was  
not long before the effect of the dauphin's  
insinuations to the people against the no-  
*blesse* broke out; for all of a sudden, the  
commons of *Picardy*, *Vermandois*, and  
the isle of *France*, began to gather together;  
and being prepossessed with an idea that  
the *noblesse* were good for nothing, or that  
they were not faithful to the king or the  
regent,

*Cruelties*  
*exercised*  
*against*  
*the no-*  
*blesse,*  
*who, in*  
*order to*  
*revenge*  
*them-*  
*selves,*  
*destroy a*  
*great*  
*number of*  
*peasants.*



Letter regent, they murdered all the gentlemen

IX. whom they could surprise in their castles, with unheard-of cruelties; having even roasted a knight, and forced his wife and children to eat of his flesh. The regent, no doubt, did not intend to carry things to that extremity; for he was even obliged to make use of the *noblesse* themselves to suppress this furious commotion: a great number of country people lost their lives on this occasion, who were slaughtered like sheep, having neither arms nor art to defend themselves. Nevertheless, tumults still continued in the city of *Paris*, and so great an one happened at last, that it restored the regent's authority by the death of the provost, of the merchants, and several others; who having endeavoured to carry liberty and independancy too high, deprived the publick of the advantages of their enterprizes, and themselves of their lives and reputation. It is from that æra, according to *Mezeray's* opinion, that we must date the end of the mixed government, by which *France* had conducted herself since the foundation of the monarchy, with more or less extent, according to the genius, capacity, and particular good fortune of her kings: this happened, as well through the disgust that was taken at the popular violences, which were improperly looked upon as the

*A sedition  
restores  
the re-  
gent's au-  
thority.*

the effect of the resolutions of the last Letter states, as because the war having lasted above eighty years after, the royal authority insensibly got the upper hand by the oblivion of the rights of particular persons, which remained without exercise in the midst of the confusion and disorders of a war that spread itself into every part of the kingdom.

IX.

We cannot, however, make too many encomiums on the ordinance of the month of *March* 1356, made at the request of the three estates; since it not only re-establishes a very equitable medium between the sovereign authority, and the natural rights of all the subjects, but by the proscription of the wicked ministers, and the confiscation of their estates, it has set us an example of the justice they deserve, which is very worthy of imitation, and at the same time less odious than the executions of so many financiers in the preceding reigns. On the other hand, the exercise of common justice was wonderfully assured by that ordinance; the liberty of the subject was maintained, and the necessities of the prince and the state sufficiently provided for. In fine, we may say, that if the king of *Navarre* had not escaped out of prison, or that if he had been capable of sacrificing his resentment immediately after he got out, as he did in process of time;

*Encomium on the ordinance of 1356.*

Letter and further still, if that ordinance could  
 IX. have been put in execution without tumult, and in an equal and general manner, *France* would not only have recovered her disgrace, but become more flourishing than ever.

*Reasons  
 why the  
 regent  
 changed  
 his max-  
 ims when  
 he became  
 king.*

Perhaps I may be asked on this occasion, why *Charles V.* one of the wisest and best intentioned of our princes, did not, during the remainder of his reign, follow that rule of government which he himself had given, and which he acknowledged to be so just? But besides that we have no precedent that any king, since *Charlemagne*, voluntarily renounced arbitrary power, when he once attained to it by his labour, address, and judgment, that is to say, when he had made it the first object of his wishes during the best part of his life; it is easy to perceive, that the events of his youth had made him better acquainted with the inconveniencies than the advantages attending too much liberty in the people: so that, disgusted and tired with seditions, necessities, murders, and robberies, and moreover being assured in himself of the use which he always intended to make of his power, he chose rather to preserve and strengthen it, in order to banish those excesses, or to prevent the return of them; than to renounce it through fear of the bad use to which his successors might afterwards



wards put it; and in the main it is evident, that states have their destinies as inevitable as those of private persons, in such sort, that he who being born free, finds himself brought to servitude by a chain of the several accidents of his life, is the natural image of a people whom occasions, events, circumstances, and even contrary effects reduce to slavery, notwithstanding the certainty of their primitive right. Such was formerly the fortune of the *Romans*, who after destroying their liberties with their own arms, could never have their belly-full of masters, and even always outstript their ambition by the most servile flattery and subjection.

As to the rest, affairs being in this condition, in *May* 1359, propositions of peace were brought over from *England*, the acceptance of which the king had referred to the states of the kingdom, whom the regent assembled for that purpose at *Paris*, by letters of convocation in the usual form; but the term was so short, that very few of the deputies could be there. The opening of the assembly was nevertheless put off for a fortnight, in order to give the members time to arrive; after which the treaty proposed was put to the vote, and unanimously rejected, conformable to the intention of the regent of the kingdom,

Letter  
IX.

*Proposi-  
tions of  
Peace are  
made, and  
rejected  
by the  
states.*

Letter and even of the king himself, though a  
 IX. prisoner. The king of *England* received  
 the news of that refusal with so much indignation and wrath, that he resolved to make war upon *France* herself, instead of that which he had until then made only against her king. For that purpose he landed at *Calais* in the month of *November*, 1359, with an army of an 100,000 men, which he led before *Rheims* with a view of getting himself crowned there: the city held out above six weeks, and that formidable army was obliged to raise the siege the 11th of *January* 1360. *Burgundy* and *Nivernois* having redeemed themselves from plunder, the *English* marched up to *Paris*, after ravaging *Champagne* and *Brie*: then retiring towards *Chartres*, a final treaty was concluded there the 8th of *May* 1360; whereby the king's deliverance was promised, upon condition of ceding *Poitou*, *Guienne*, and several other countries to *England*, in full sovereignty, and paying a ransom in ready money, so high, that *France* never was able to acquit herself of it. In this manner ended the terrible disgrace of king *John*, who having re-entered his dominions the 24th of *October*, 1360, staid in them till the winter of the year 1363, every day aggravating his in-  
 con-

Edward  
 makes a  
 descent  
 upon  
 France.

Peace is  
 granted,  
 and upon  
 what con-  
 ditions.

consideration and ill conduct. After Letter which, upon very improper pretences, IX. he would go over to *England* again, where he died three months after, on the 8th of *April*, before *Easter*, in the year 1363.



LETTER





## L E T T E R X.

*Remarks and reflections on the regency of Charles V. A short history of his reign. States of Paris in 1369. Declaration concerning a king's majority.*

Letter X. **Y**OU may have observed, that after the fatal day which put king *John* in the power of *Edward III.* king of *England*, the dauphin duke of *Normandy*, his eldest son, made haste to assemble the states of the kingdom; and that nevertheless, whether through modesty, or for reasons of state, he assumed no other quality in his letters of convocation, and the ordinance he published at the instances of the states, than that of lieutenant to the king his father. Politicians have made many curious enquiries to find out the reasons that hindered him from taking the title of regent, which ought to belong to him in a manner so much the more indisputable, as that he was not only heir apparent, but likewise the necessary and designed successor; besides, being a major of twenty years compleat, and the wisest prince of his family, of which he soon gave

*Why the dauphin did not at first take upon him the title of regent.*

gave proofs, the king's absence naturally ought to have transferred the supreme rank and authority to his person. Among several reasons given, some have stuck to the most antient tradition now remaining on this subject, founded on a speech made by *Philip Pot*, lord of *la Roche*, deputy of the province of *Burgundy*, in the assembly of the states-general held in the year 1483, during the minority of *Charles VIII.* that lord having undertaken to shew the other deputies the extent and the use they ought to make of their authority, asserts as a fundamental principle, that during the captivity of king *John*, the states took the government of the police and finances of the kingdom upon themselves; and that, though his eldest son was twenty years old, they did not confer the power and title of regent upon him till two years after the first convocation, that is, when they were well acquainted with his capacity and good intentions. This fact, nevertheless, is not strictly true; for tho' the duke of *Normandy* did not, indeed, take the regency until eighteen months after the battle of *Poitiers*; it does not appear by any record, that the states-general formed any resolution on that subject, either for suspending, or conferring that quality on the prince, together with the authority which is attached to it: tho' I would

Letter  
X.

Letter would not be thought to deny that the  
 X. lord of *la Roche* might have had better  
 ~~~~~ memoirs on that head than those now  
 left us.

Mezeray
 and father
 Daniel's
 senti-
 ments on
 that sub-
 ject.

Mezeray and father *Daniel*, on the con-
 trary, advance, on this occasion, a thing
 which in my opinion seems very impro-
 bable, not to say entirely false; for they
 assert, that the duke of *Normandy* got him-
 self declared regent by the parliament,
 and took advantage of the king of *Na-
 varre's* absence to bring it about. The o-
 riginal chronicle relates this event in a
 more simple and credible manner; in say-
 ing that the *Wednesday* the 14th of *March*,
 1357, the duke of *Normandy's* new title
 was proclaimed in *Paris*; that, for the fu-
 ture, the king's name was forbid to be
 made use of, either in *arrêts* of the par-
 liament, or in any other publick acts;
 and that having sent back the seal of the
Chatelet, which had been used since his
 confinement, they declared that they
 would for the future make use of the seal
 of the regency for sealing in yellow wax, as
 was practised during the king's govern-
 ment: to which it adds, that the same
 day *Stephen Marcel* provost of the mer-
 chants, *Robert de Corbie*, *Charles Confac*,
 and *John de Lisle*, aldermen, took their
 seats in the regent's council below *Robert
 le Cocq*, bishop of *Laon*, who was prime
 mi-

'Antient Par

minister. Now
us room to sup
bly of the states
before, there w
good substanti
of *Paris*, that
mined the dau
cy upon him,
ed him with
which no long
dently shews th
king of *Navarre*
the dauphin's reg
ter sily improved
from the parliame
the other aldermei
principal authors of
that they were rewa
the dauphin's admit
council the same day
about it, because e
that the king of *Na*
prisoner all the forego
castle of *Arleux*, w
had shut him up: the
phin had had time eno
regency confer'd upon him
ficulty had only proceed
king of *Navarre*. In fine,
know, that the bishop of *La*
and his consorts, were the cre
declared partizans of the king

on the

more impor-
tance, since
other, accord-
ing to the
law, or the par-
liamentary agency on the
part of the
it when the
no provision in
the act for examina-
tion resembles any o-
ther, fully ex-
ercising authority at the head
of the department have made
every heart of his
which he remain-
ed well judge that he
in event, and conse-
quence to nominate a
man in case he should
be confined imme-
diately incapable of making
provision; so that the go-
vernment have remained vacant,
and designed successor,
in hand under the title
of regent. But I may be asked,
can he declare himself regent?
not much greater than the
opposing it was, decency re-
quires the necessary successor should
be distinguished: and it is from
without doubt, that the former
con-

concluded that he expected to receive it from the authority of the states, who alone are capable of granting it, when the king living has not given it himself. On the other hand, two historians of reputation would make us believe, that he received it from the parliament: we may, indeed, think that they spoke at random, or in regard to the present ideas, according to which people are persuaded that that tribunal concurs to the authority of ordinances, when they register them in order to perpetuate their notoriety. I have said that in fact, the chronicle of those days gives us nothing decisive on that affair; so that all that remains is, to know whether the registers of the parliament contain any thing that may solve the difficulty: but, besides that I am not at hand to consult them, those who question the faithfulness of the antient acts, by the false argument, that the parliament has been in possession, these several ages past, of solely keeping the records and the authority of the rank which it assumes, would not, perhaps, yield to their testimony.

In this perplexity, durst I hazard a notion grounded on the bare expressions of the history, I would observe, in order to establish it; 1. That as in those days the qualities of the king's lieutenant-general, and regent of the kingdom, were very

Letter
X.

The author's sentiments on that question.

Letter very near equal in authority and dignity,
X. and had been often conferred on private
persons, whose virtue was their only recommendation, it follows, that both the one and the other were infinitely heightened by the natural dignity of the duke of *Normandy*, dauphin, and eldest son to the king. 2. It was generally acknowledged, that the quality of the king's lieutenant alone gave him sufficient authority to convoke the states, and statute absolutely upon their advice and remonstrances. 3. That that prince, knowing the irregular and capricious vicious temper of the king his father, acted with a very laudable prudence and moderation, when he contented himself with the lowest title he could take, subjecting his right and ambition to the safety of the kingdom. 4. That the savage temper of king *John* sufficiently signalized itself, even at the expence of his own advantage, when, in hatred to the authority his son had taken, he, by a declaration given in his prison at *Bordeaux*, before his passage to *England*, annulled all that he had done in the assembly of the states of 1356, and forbade the continuation of it: chusing rather to make an ill-concerted truce with his enemy, than rest satisfied with the zeal of his son, and the liberality of his subjects, because they had condemned and displaced his

evil

evil counsellors. The posture of affairs, Letter
and the disposition of people's minds being such, can we be surprized that the duke of *Normandy* waited a long time before he would take upon him the title of regent, and that he studied, managed, and, as it were, brought about the juncture, in which he thought he might assume it without offending his father, and incurring his indignation? On the other hand, can we believe with any probability, that the duke, who so thoroughly knew his natural rights, and had made use of them with so much success, could ever entertain any thoughts of obtaining the exercise of them from the *gracious* liberality of the parliament? This seems repugnant to the common idea, since the frequent assemblies of the states which were held during the interval, pointed out to him a superior jurisdiction; a jurisdiction of so much the greater authority, as being the representative body of the whole nation. But after all, it is more likely that he had recourse to neither, for taking possession of the regency: for, in fact, it was sufficient that the king his father, dispirited by constraint and the lothings of his confinement, came to understand, at last, that not being able to save his own person, he ought at least to save his kingdom, and preserve it to his children; and that

Letter there was no better way to attain that end,
 X. than to abandon to the management of so
 ~~~~~ wise and moderate a son an authority  
 which he could no longer exercise him-  
 self. Thus, as soon as king *John* had gi-  
 ven his consent for his son's regency, for  
 suppressing his own name in all the acts  
 and *arrêts*, and breaking his seal (for all  
 the ceremonies were formally observed)  
 the dauphin ordered the parliament to re-  
 gister the declaration by which he assumed  
 the sovereign power, to the end that no-  
 thing might be wanting to its notoriety;  
 and over-and-above, he caused it to be  
 proclaimed in the capital. Thus, I think,  
 I may resolve the proposed problem in the  
 most plausible manner; since it gives to  
 each of the three orders, to the dauphin,  
 and to the king himself, the rights be-  
 longing to them. In fact, if we consider  
 the thing in the general thesis, to whom  
 can we judge that the regency of the state  
 belongs, except to the heir apparent, who  
 has a real interest to preserve what ought  
 and may some time or other be his own?  
 But if he has a right to that regency, is  
 it reasonable that he should obtain the in-  
 vestiture and exercise of it from a particu-  
 lar tribunal, such as the parliament may  
 be? There would be more pretext to sus-  
 tain, that the states of the kingdom ought  
 at least to be consulted on such occurrences:  
 how-



however, in my opinion, the constant and certain right, such as the duke of Normandy's, of which we are speaking, did not stand in need of being acknowledged by those, who, by their condition of subjects, were deemed bound to submit to it: and all that we can reasonably add, is, that in case of a dispute between two parties, the states would be the sole and true competent judges of the best.

Letter  
X.

*Solution  
of some  
other que-  
stions.*

Our problem cannot, however, entirely stop at this solemn solution: for several other important questions start from the same principle. As for example, a man may ask, what idea must we have of the authority of a king in prison? To which I shall answer, without any round-about arguments, that it ought to be considered no more than that of a dead king; for, next to non-existence, there is not a more formal obstacle to the exercise of sovereign power than the want of liberty: wherefore we see that king *John's* power was declared null, at the request of the states, when he took it into his head to annihilate the ordinance drawn up in the year 1356. I may again be asked, whether the right of regency, acknowledged in the heir apparent, can, nevertheless, be suspended by the will of the monarch living; in such a manner as to leave him master, of transferring the government to

Letter whom he pleases? This question may be

X. considered two ways: as to the monarch obliged to be absent from his kingdom on foreign expeditions, it is generally agreed that he is master to confide the government to whom he pleases, without any regard to his relations, or even his heirs: in this manner *Louis the Young*, *Philip the August*, and *St. Louis* disposed of it, during their voyages to the east: but as to testamentary dispositions, it is needless to mention them; the discussion of them must be referred to the following letters, when I shall examine this matter on occasion of the *arrêt* issued against the dauphin *Charles VII.* and the injustice done to the duke of *Orleans*, afterwards *Louis XII.* during the minority of *Charles VIII.* It is sufficient at present to have proved to a demonstration, that the regency is a natural right relative to that of the succession, and that in order to possess it justly, and to exercise all the functions of it, the prince to whom it belongs does not stand in need either of the institution of the parliament, or the acknowledgment of the three estates.

*Observations on the seats in the states, and the manner of voting in them.*

I should have been desirous to say something in this place, of the manner of the sitting of the states, and the methods of deliberating in them: but after examining the monuments we have left of the assemblies

semblies already mention'd, I found that Letter  
but a very few observations could be drawn X.  
from them: the first of which, relates to  
the rank held in it by the princes of the  
royal blood, such as *Philip* of *Orleans*  
brother to king *John*, and the peers of  
*France*, or at least the ecclesiasticks. Up-  
on which we may remark, that though  
their pre-eminency was quite established,  
especially since the beginning of the 14th  
century, yet they made a body, not on-  
ly with the *noblesse*, but likewise with the  
other deputies; that they voted with  
them, and that they were appointed to  
speak without any particular distinction,  
and even looked upon it as an honour.  
The second relates to the exclusion of the  
king's officers in the assembly of 1356,  
when they would have assisted at the de-  
bates, much with the same views as  
when the great officers of the household  
assumed the right of sitting in the parlia-  
ments: an enterprize in which they could  
not succeed, notwithstanding the dau-  
phin's interest; for they were obliged to  
retire, in order to leave the deputies at  
full liberty. In fine, the third regards  
the method followed in that assembly, of  
forming a deputation chamber, composed  
of fifty members chosen from among the  
rest, much like the committees of the  
parliament of *England*, which, with a



Letter view of abridging difficulties, was ordered  
 X. to consider and carefully digest the matters  
 that were to be proposed.

*The au-  
 thor's re-  
 flections  
 upon some  
 articles of  
 the ordi-  
 nance.*

Another thing to be done, would be, to examine in detail the ordinance of 1356; but I shall confine my self to a few articles, which seem to deserve a particular application. We see, first, that the power of the states was acknowledged for a fundamental law in regard to all imposts; so that the king could not lay any by his sole authority; and in the most pressing necessities he was obliged to demand the consent of the three estates, because the votes of two of them could never bind the third. Consequently, it was supposed, that the domain of the crown, consisting of lands, duties, quit-rents, rents, tenants-services, and acknowledgments, and the profit on the coin, which the kings had lately attributed to themselves; that these funds, I say, ought to be sufficient, not only for their own private expences, but for the usual expences of the crown. 2. We find, that in order to apply a remedy to the past disorders and dissipation of the publick money, the states assumed the authority of examining into the real necessities, that they might settle the taxes in proportion to the expence; and that with this view they established in every diocese, or province, a chamber,

con-

consisting of nine persons chosen out of Letter  
the three orders, to whom they committed X.  
the power of imposing, receiving,   
paying, and applying those taxes and their  
produce, according to the instructions gi-  
ven them; the whole at the charge of the  
account they were to bring in to the states-  
general in their assemblies. Wherefore,  
we cannot sufficiently wonder to see those  
tribunals of the elections filled at present  
with the lees of the people, and become  
the most contemptible of all jurisdictions.  
3. We see, that in order to guard against  
corruption, which is so common in those  
who have a fingering of the publick mo-  
ney, it was expressly ordered, that there  
should be accountable receivers, charged  
with the receipt and expence, and that  
the particular ordinances of the elected  
could not be put in execution except they  
were all unanimous in their opinions. 4.  
That among the articles of reformation,  
the venality of the offices of judicature  
was proscribed, as being the principal  
source of all abuses: a thing which so  
many former leagues and remonstrances  
had not been able to obtain of the justice  
of the princes. But for greater security it  
was ordered, that nobody should ever be  
allowed to exercise the functions of a ma-  
gistrate in the place where he was born;  
so far were they at that time persuaded of

Letter the necessity of destroying the idea of some  
 X. people, who look upon the functions of  
 judges and magistrates as a civil occupation, destined to riches and the condition of certain persons, and not as employments equally painful and honourable, which ought never to be granted but to capacity and merit, and not to ambition, and the money of those who aspire to them. 5. We see in this ordinance a terrible censure on the two first courts of justice, the parliament, and the chamber of accompts; which we ought to be the more touched with, inasmuch as we observe the same faults committed at present; a multiplicity of useless officers; neglect or avarice in most of them; an indifference about true justice; a predominant attention to the forms of law; ostentation and sloth in the chiefs, and an almost declared open corruption in the lower class. 6. We may admire in it the firmness of the states in removing the evil ministers, and excluding them for-ever from all employments; even pursuing their punishment notwithstanding their dignity, and the protection with which the king and the dauphin honoured them: a thing, however, in which they were not able to succeed entirely, but which has, nevertheless, for ever stigmatized the *Buffys*, the

*Dor.*



*Dorgemonts*, the *Braques*, and several others, besides the cardinal *de la Forest*.

7. Those same states prudently prevented the general abuse which courtiers make of their interest for obtaining personal emoluments and favours, or selling them to others: they likewise condemned the private treaties and affociations, too frequent among that set of men, in order to gain certain ends, as if they had foreseen at that time the particular disorders of our age. 8. We find by the 39th article of this ordinance, that the inferior judges were answerable for their judgments, and that they were condemned to certain fines when their sentences were annulled by the superior judge; whereas those very fines have since been fixed upon the parties; thus overthrowing the wisest precautions of the ages of innocence; for that which we are speaking of required learning and attention in the lowest magistrates. And may we not venture to say, that this article would be more necessary than ever in our time, and in our provinces, where justice is bought and sold with impunity? Besides which, as justice is no longer administred *gratis*, it would be evidently just that those who reap the benefit of administering it, should run the risk of the penalty of giving wrong judgments.

This

Letter

X.

Alterations  
in the  
coin.

This ordinance, which I esteem worthy of eternal memory, deserves a great many more remarks; but the necessity of abridging, makes me pass to the recital of the extreme and inconceivable robberies then practised in the coin. For domestick divisions being added to the foreign war, and both happening at a time when the state was exhausted by a wicked and fraudulent administration, the poverty of the people was so great, that the value of the mark of silver was raised to twelve *livres* the 21st of *March*, 1359, instead of five *livres* five *sols*, at which it had been fixed the 6th of *January* 1355-6; and the gold crown was likewise raised to ten times more than its true value. But king *John* at his return from *England*, whether he was become more attentive than before, or whether he condescended to yield to the advice of the duke of *Normandy* his son, whose wisdom had been so well tried during his absence, made the famous ordinance of *Compeigne* dated the 5th of *December* 1360, by which he reduced the value of the mark of gold to sixty *livres*, and the silver mark to five *livres* eight *sols*; which was altered no more during his reign. This is the only thing we can say in his praise; and yet it is evident, that nothing but extreme adversity forced him to that act of justice. We must nevertheless

less observe, that having 3,00,0000 of Letter  
gold crowns to pay to the king of England, X.  
which, according to the proportion with  
the silver, were worth 33,000,000 of  
marks, at certain terms expressed in the  
treaty of *Bretigny*; and the latter not be-  
ing of a temper to put up with bad mo-  
ney, there was a necessity of fixing a pro-  
per value on the coin of the kingdom, to  
avoid giving rise to a new war. The same  
ordinance of the 5th of *December* 1360,  
fixes for a large number of years, that is  
to say, until a peace is perfectly settled,  
the imposition of the aids and *gabelles*, at  
the rate of twelve *deniers per livre* in the  
sale of all merchandize, products of the  
kingdom; the thirteenth on wines and o-  
ther drinks, and the fifth on salt: which  
duties he declared he would have levied  
for his own profit throughout the whole  
extent of the *Languedoil*, by the persons  
he should commission for that purpose.  
This order was received without contra-  
diction, and executed with the same obe-  
dience as if it had come from a victorious  
monarch, or proceeded from the unani-  
mous resolution of the states. We may,  
indeed, look upon that obedience as an  
effect of the compassion due to that prince's  
misfortune, or even as an effect of the  
publick interest; since the greatest lords of  
the kingdom, and the best burghers of the  
great

*The king  
fixes the  
imposition  
of the  
aids and  
gabelles  
until a  
peace.*



Letter

X.



*Forbids  
the no-  
blesse the  
use of  
private  
wars.*

*And car-  
rying  
arms  
through-  
out the  
whole  
kingdom.*

cities had been given as hostages for the payment of his ransom. Nevertheless, whatever might be the cause of it, nothing is more evident than that the authority of the states received a great breach on that occasion; since at least the right of collecting and applying the public money was taken from them. We must say as much of another ordinance, given out at *Easter* following; by which the king forbade the *noblesse* the use of private wars, as long as the enemies continued in the kingdom; a circumstance, which however is not applied to the *English*, with whom a peace had just been made, but rather to the troops of *Banditti*, who having taken rise on occasion of the war, ravaged *France* at that time, and had just gained a great battle in the neighbourhood of *Lyons*, in which the constable *James* of *Bourbon*, count of *la Marche*, and his eldest son, lost their lives. The same reason, or pretext, made him issue a new ordinance three months after, forbidding the subjects to carry arms; which ordinance extended to the whole kingdom. That, indeed, was the only way to put a stop to disorders and plundering; and it seems that the *noblesse* did not take umbrage at it, as not thinking it intended for them, though the court did not fail to make use of it against them in the sequel: for having finished the wars that

that happened 100 years after, the written ordinances were found, and the antient rights had been neglected, and were quite out of memory: a pretext by which *Louis XI.* made himself as absolute master of the *nobleſſe* as of the people. We may ſay farther, that what favoured the execution of thoſe ordinances, was the abſence of ſo many great lords, who, as I have juſt obſerved, being detained in the priſons of *England*, whither moſt of them went over *bona fide* to remain hoſtages for the king's ranſom, they were not informed of what was acting in *France*, or at leaſt were very far from being in that condition, which would have been neceſſary for forming any oppoſition againſt it, in regard to their private intereſt.

During the reſt of this reign, it appears that as far as the duke of *Normandy's* counſels prevailed, they applied themſelves to repair the breaches which the peace with *England* had made in the crown. By a declaration given at the *Louvre* in *November 1361*, the king irrevocably unites to it the dutchies of *Normandy* and *Burgundy*, with the counties of *Champagne* and *Toulouſe*. But through an effect of his uſual unſteadineſs, he repented the making that union, and made a private donation of the dutchy of *Burgundy* to *Philip* his fourth ſon, which is dated at *Germigny* on the river

Letter  
X.

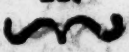
*Inequality and  
inconſtancy of  
that  
prince.*

Letter river *Marne*, the 6th of *September* 1363.

X. The instrument of that donation he deposited in the hands of the chancellor of that dutchy, under his oath of secrecy; but by other letters of the twenty-second of *October* following, dated at *Rheims*, he gave the chancellor leave to deliver up that donation to his son, to be at his disposal at the king's death: he was, indeed, in the right to conceal an action, which, by the event has cost *France* so dear even to this present time. On the other hand, that prince, full of whims, had taken it into his head some time before, to marry *Joan* queen of *Naples*, the most abominable woman of that age, and make her his third wife: with so preposterous a view he went to *Avignon*, thinking to gain his ends by the pope's mediation; but he changed his mind soon after, and took up with another project still much more whimsical: he entered himself in the crusade, in order to go to the *Holy Land*, and got the pope to declare him generalissimo of the armies of *Christendom* in the east: however, coming back to *Paris*, in order to prepare every thing for his voyage; and tired with the judicious daily remonstrances which the dauphin duke of *Normandy* was obliged to make to him, he resolved to return to *England* in order to get rid of them. He undertook the journey in spite of all the reasons

Goes over  
to Eng-  
land, and  
dies there.



reasons that could be offered against it, Letter  
and died in that country the 8th of April X.  
1364. 

This is certainly a very melancholy picture of the inconstant mind of one of our monarchs, and the fatal events that were the consequences of it: but still I believe, that few reigns will be more instructive than this single one, were we really disposed to improve by the lessons it gives us. However, the natural order of time is going to present us with another, in which the regularity, œconomy, authority, and wisdom of the prince, will furnish us with another sort of instruction, by shewing in what manner we may fight against the most inveterate destiny, and even triumph over it. But as encomiums are not generally so instructive as criticism, I shall reduce my observations on the conduct of *Charles V.* to a very few articles.

I shall remark first, as an important article, that this prince, born with great qualities, wanted sufficient instructions in his youth: he was born of a father more fit to destroy his natural talents than to improve them, and in a time too when sciences seemed to be banished from civil society: these two causes inclined him rather to superstitious than religious practices. However, as he had a great deal of wit, and as the traverses he met with very early increased

*Reflections on the administration of Charles V.*

Letter increased his industry, he soon judged that  
 X. nothing but dexterity, and the right way of  
 ~~~~~ managing conjunctures and opportunities,  
 could retrieve his affairs and his dignity; he therefore resolved to apply himself to intriguing and negotiating, more than any king of *France* had done before him: but it was not long before he loved and practised those arts too much, which drew upon him the hatred of foreigners, as well as of several of his subjects: he was by both complained of as a trickster and chicaner, who, not daring to make open war against his enemies, attacked them by process and law-suits. It is true, nevertheless, that his generals never wanted either courage to undertake, or conduct, to execute any thing by his orders. In the meantime, the truth of history obliges us to confess, that what succeeded with him on one side, against the *English*, was the real cause of the loss of *Bretagne* on the other, after he had conquered it; so true it is, that the greatest men are often the blindest in what they undertake.

*Detail of
 what
 passed
 in the
 first as-
 sembly of
 states he
 convoked.*

During this reign, there were but two assemblies of the states-general; the first convoked at *Paris* the 8th of *May* 1369, in the parliament of the palace-chamber, in order to hear the cause of the barons of *Guienne*, appealing to the king's court, from the ordinances made by the prince of

of *Wales*, eldest son to the king of *Eng-land*, who pretended to be sovereign of the country, in consequence of the cession made to him of it by the treaty of *Bretigny*. This cause was a very important one, as well because it tended to plunge the kingdom into a new war, as by reason that the stipulations of the precedent treaty of peace seemed intirely opposite to the receiving that appeal. Nevertheless, the king would receive it, because he had brought it about by a piece of dexterity without parallel; and that he thought he had taken all the necessary measures to support it, and make war with success, considering the great age of his enemy the king of *England*, and the mortal disease which the prince of *Wales* then laboured under. But at the same time, desirous to prepare a resource for himself in case of need, in the good-will of the people; and in order to shew the perfect confidence he had in them, he assembled the states-general, as I have just observed. The great chronicle, which relates the order of the sitting, held in the great chamber of the palace, says that the king placed himself on his judgment seat, with the queen by his side under the canopy; that the bishop of *Beauvais*, chancellor and cardinal, filled the usual place of the first president, on the lower bench;

Letter and that in the same rank sate the arch-
 X. bishop of *Rheims, Sens, and Tours*; the
 ~~~~~ bishops of *Coutance, Evreux, Noyon, Ar-*  
*ras, Troyes, Bayeux, Maine, Paris, Li-*  
*sieux, and Orleans*; and several abbots,  
 most of whom sate on the ground for want  
 of room: that on the other side, on the  
 king's right hand, sate queen *Jane of Ev-*  
*reux*, widow of *Charles the Fair*, and the  
 lords of the *Flower de Lucs*; viz. the  
 duke of *Orleans*, the king's uncle, the  
 duke of *Burgundy*, the count of *Alençon*,  
 the count of *Eu* of the name of *Artois*,  
 the count of *Etampes* of the name of *Ev-*  
*reux*, uncle to the king of *Navarre*; the  
 count of *Boulogne*, and the lord of *Mont-*  
*lezun Gascon*, the grand prior of  
*France*, the count of *Tancarville* of the  
 name of *Melun*; the fires of *Albret* and of  
*Chatillon*; and a great many other lords  
 and noblesse, who compleated the filling up  
 the \* *parquet*: on the outside was the  
 third estate, in so great a number that the  
 chamber was entirely filled. The chan-  
 cellor spoke first; and having taken for his  
 text that fine verse in the first chapter of  
 the book of *Esther*, where it is said, *That*  
*Ahasuerus communed with the wise men,*  
*which knew the times, for so was the*  
*king's manner towards all that knew*

\* The part of the floor that was railed in.

law

law and judgment, he set forth part Letter  
of the king's intentions. His brother X.  
*William de Dormans* continued the speech,   
which the weakness of the chancellor's  
voice obliged him to break off: after  
which the king spoke himself, and said,  
that he had caused all the proceedings to  
be laid before them, with the detail of  
the negotiations with *England*, to the end  
that every body might be able to form a  
judgment of it, and speak his opinion:  
then proclamation was made by his order,  
that the session should be held the *Thurs-*  
*day* following, being *Ascension-Day*, after  
divine service, and the *Friday* morning,  
which was the day he would receive the  
opinion of the deputies. On *Thursday*  
the queen appeared again in the assembly;  
and they began to take it ill, that so wise a  
prince as the king was, should have the  
weakness to give her place in a general  
council of the kingdom, merely to divert  
her. The grievances of the barons of  
*Guienne* were examined in this sitting;  
and the king concluded it by repeating that  
he would have the advice of his good sub-  
jects, because he was ready to correct what  
he might have done either amiss or too  
much: this compliment was answered by  
tumultuous acclamations, and offers of  
service and fidelity. On *Friday* the 11th  
of *May*, the sitting was the same, and the  
queen

Letter queen did not fail to be there. That day  
 X. the harangues of the three bodies were  
 heard: that of the clergy tended to assure  
 the king's conscience, by \* shewing that  
 if the king of *England* made war on ac-  
 count of the king's receiving the appeals,  
 it would be a wrong and unjust action in  
 him: the *noblesse*, according to their  
 custom, did not throw away much time  
 in arguments, but offered their lives and  
 fortunes: in fine, the third estate con-  
 cluded by applauding the judicial proceed-  
 ings, of which they heightened the exact-  
 ness, as well as the honour of the chan-  
 cellor. In this manner the assembly broke  
 up, because, according to the king's no-  
 tion, it was not yet time to demand any  
 money, and it was sufficient then to have  
 got them to approve of the war. In fact,  
 the *English* entered *France* immediately  
 after; and as their ravages in *Picardy* and  
*Normandy*, began to make the people  
 murmur, they had to comfort them, the  
 spectacle of processions and publick pray-  
 ers, which, joined to the conclusions of the

\* How cleverly the clergy could quiet the king's con-  
 science, for the notorious breach of a peace that left him  
 in possession of the crown of France, which it was in  
 Edward's power to have taken from him! but French  
 faith and French gratitude have always been the same;  
 that court never changes her maxims, and perhaps we  
 may soon have new and unwelcome proofs of the effects  
 of them.

states,



states, made them think that nothing was Letter  
so just as that war; and that the *English* X.  
were mere devils to demand the execution  
of a treaty solemnly sworn and promised by  
the *French*.

Towards the end of the year, the king  
foreseeing the danger of another campaign,  
convoked again the states-general to meet at  
*Paris*, both in the palace, and at the *Hotel*  
of *St. Paul*, for the 7th of *September* the  
same year: and then it was that he made  
them pay dearly for the facility with  
which they had accepted the war. Ne-  
vertheless, every thing passed quietly in it;  
the assembly was charmed with the king's  
affability, and the reason and justice which  
shined in his speeches: his eloquence and  
his promises triumphed over the senti-  
ments of all the deputies, so that the aid  
which they granted, was one of the great-  
est that any states had ever given. We  
find, nevertheless, by the detail which the  
chronicle gives, that he was obliged to set  
forth his necessities in pathetick terms:  
that the states made an estimate of the ex-  
pences of the war; and that after several  
sittings they agreed, that the imposition of  
twelve *deniers per livre* in the sale of goods  
and merchandize, and the fifth of the  
price of salt, should be continued upon the  
same footing it was since king *John's*  
return. They likewise continued the

*And of  
the tran-  
sactions of  
the second.*

Letter thirteenth *denier* upon wine and other

IX.

teenth upon what was sold by *retale*. The cities took upon themselves a duty upon the entry of wines, which at *Paris* was twelve *sols* for every hoghead of *French* wines, and twenty-four *sols* for *Burgundy* wines. But as those imposts, which had been established in order to pay, from term to term, king *John's* ransom, were in some measure ordinary, they added a hearth-money, or tax of four *livres*, that is to say four gold *francs* of twenty each *sols*, on every fire in the good substantial towns, and thirty *sols* on each fire in the open country, one with another. The misfortune is, that we have no monuments left that can shew us the amount or produce of those taxes; historians having contented themselves with telling us that they were levied with so much wisdom and moderation, that they did not occasion the least disturbance. And a modern author, who has written the life of *Charles V.* adds, with a great deal of delicacy, that they were paid the more freely, because it was well known that under the government of such a prince, they would end with the war. This is almost all the detail that can be given of the two assemblies of the states convoked by *Charles V.* We need

need not wonder that we don't find in them, as in the former ones, any complaints against the government, projects for a reformation, or remonstrances against abuses: for the reputation of justice, and the effectual judicious conduct of the prince, had gained him so much confidence and authority, that people thought that the good which he had not yet done, could not possibly have been executed, and laid the blame on the juncture of affairs, and the misfortune of the times.

But these two sittings will admit of a few remarks on the singularity we find in them, there having been almost no regard at all shewn to the dignity of the peerage: we see that the duke of *Orleans* took place of the duke of *Burgundy*, first peer; tho' afterwards the latter did not yield precedence to his eldest brother, then regent of the kingdom: we likewise see the bishop of *Noyon* giving place to those of *Coutance* and *Evreux*; and the count of *Boulogne*, and the lord of *Mont-lexun*, sitting in the rank of the princes honoured with the peerage. I shall further observe, that the register *du Tillet*, upon the watch to seize all advantages for the parliament in his collection of the history of the kings of *France*, would fain make those two assemblies of the states pass for simple

Letter  
X.

*The authors reflections on these two sittings.*



Letter \**beds of justice*, against the formal expression

X. of the great chronicle, and the very words  
 of the registers which he quotes himself.  
 But what appears important on this enquiry, is to find out why the several states of the kingdom, which we have hitherto mentioned, always include but part of the provinces within its extent, determined by the word *Languedoil*; as if *Languedoc*, *Auvergne*, and *Limosin*, did not belong to the monarchy. This, however, is but a small difficulty; for in order to resolve it, we need but remember that the county of *Toulouse*, with its dependencies, was not united to the crown till after the death of St. *Louis*, and that the other great lordships of *Languedoc*, such as the viscounty of *Beziers*, and the barony of *Montpellier*, were not acquired till the last years of the reign of *Philip of Valois*; the whole upon condition that these several countries should still be governed by their own laws, and by the states of the country, under a lieutenant-general appointed by the king. This regulation was always effectually observed afterwards; and the people were so satisfied with it, that they gave marks of their attachment and fidelity to the crown upon several occasions.

\* *The king's throne in parliament is called bed of justice: so that he is always said to hold a bed of justice when he goes to the parliament.*

They

They distinguished themselves chiefly after the loss of the battle of *Poitiers*: for the count of *Armagnac*, the king's lieutenant in those provinces, having convoked the states to meet at *Toulouse* in the month of *November* 1356, without expressing any partiality or hatred against the past government, of which, indeed, they had not felt all the injustice, they took excellent resolutions, as well for raising a considerable army, and paying it well during a year, as for regulating the coin within their district, without troubling themselves with what passed in *France*, where the states-general did not proceed with the same tranquility: so that by way of recompence for so wise a conduct, *Charles* continued to leave the states of *Languedoc* in the administration of their own affairs, and would not confound them with the rest of the kingdom. This lasted until the reign of *Louis XI.* though the liberty of those provinces began to be infringed in *Charles* the VIth's time, when his uncles got the government of them conferred upon them, in hopes of making greater perquisites there, than they could do in *France*, which afforded fewer resources on account of the war.

I have nothing else to mention now but the famous ordinance about the majority of the kings, which the foresight of *Charles* the

*Charles*  
makes a  
law for  
the ma-  
jority of  
the kings.

Letter the fifth founded upon the weakness of  
 X. his health, the tender age of his eldest  
 son, and the consideration of the great ob-  
 stacles which minorities were at that time  
 to the preservation of the domain, because  
 homages or oaths of fidelity could not be  
 exacted but by a major king of twenty-  
 one years old. *Charles* having the thoughts  
 of death often in his mind, laboured be-  
 times about the plan of this law, which he  
 pretended to render perpetual, and fix at  
 last by an ordinance he issued at *Vincennes*,  
 in the month of *August* 1374, six years  
 before his death. He thought of getting  
 it published in parliament; but being op-  
 pressed by his distempers, he contented  
 himself, in the month of *November* fol-  
 lowing, with making a *will*, by which he  
 left the regency, with the guardianship of  
 his children, to the queen his wife, substi-  
 tuting to her *Philip* duke of *Burgundy*,  
 and *Louis* duke of *Bourbon*, until his eldest  
 son attained his fourteenth year. He order-  
 ed, that the money which might be saved  
 out of the revenues of the crown, should be  
 deposited every year in the hands of *Bureau*  
*de la Riviere*, and *Philip de Savoisy*, his  
 chamberlains; *Bertrand Duclos*, and *Pe-*  
*ter du Castel*, masters of the accounts; in  
 order to be returned after his son's majori-  
 ty: he likewise appointed a council of  
 forty-seven persons to assist the regent, a  
 list



list of whom is to be found at the beginning of the history of *Charles VI.* by *M. le Laboureur.* But this guardianship did not take place, the queen dying three years before her husband. There is great appearance that this loss prevailed upon him to make another *will*, and the duke of *Anjou*, the eldest of his brothers, pretended afterwards that there was one in his favour, passed in form of declaration, for conferring the regency upon him: but, indeed, the little confidence which the king reposed in that brother, prevented its being registered; and this proved afterwards a great subject for quarrels and contentions, as I shall relate in the sequel. In the midst of those uncertainties, the design of establishing a formal law, for the majority, was not laid aside: the king caused his scheme to be examined in the most famous universities; after which he made a solemn declaration of it, and caused it to be published and registered in parliament, himself being present. The lords that assisted in the holding that *bed of justice*, were the dauphin, his eldest son, who sat without the canopy, but not far from the king; and the duke of *Anjou* sat upon the same bench: on the left were the patriarch of *Alexandria*, the archbishops of *Rheims*, *Sens*, *Toulouse*, and *Embrun*; the bishops of *Laon*,  
*Meaux*,

Letter *Meaux, Paris, Dole, Auxerre, Nevers, X. and Evreux*; the abbots of *St. Denys, Ep-  
 ~~~~~thernac, St. Vuaſt of Atras, St. Colombe*  
of Sens, St. Cyprian of Poitiers, and Ven-
doſme; the clerks counſellors of the parlia-
 ment, the rector of the univerſity, with
 a number of doctors of the four faculties,
 the dean of the cathedral, the dignitaries
 of the chapters, and ſeveral canons: on the
 right hand, lower than the duke of *An-*
jou, were the counts of *Alençon, Eu, and*
la Marche, the latter bearing the name of
Bourbon; *Robert of Artois*, brother to the
 count of *Eu*; the counts *de Braſſine, Liſſe,*
and Raymond de Beaufort, ſon to the viſ-
 count of *Turenne*; with the lay-men of the
 parliament

*The au-
 thor's re-
 ſlections
 on the va-
 lidity of
 this ordi-
 nance.*

It is proper to remark on this occaſion,
 that *du Tillet*, and all our modern hi-
 ſtorians, prepoſſeſſed with a notion that
 the parliament has a right to authorize
 and change, according to their pleaſure,
 the ordinances of the kings, give no o-
 ther date in this declaration than that of
 the 21ſt of *May 1375*, which is the day
 it was regiſtered, tho' it is certain it is of
 the month of *Auguſt* the foregoing year.
 But I have heard other perſons ſuſtain, that
 this ordinance, containing a new law,
 ſtood in need of the conſent of an aſſem-
 bly of the ſtates general, or at leaſt the
 barons of *France*, in regard to the antient

cu-

custom, for irrevocably establishing the execution of it. In fact, it was violently disputed at the accession of *Francis II.* the malecontents maintaining then that his pretended majority was a manifest abuse, since the ordinance of *Charles V.* never had been regularly accepted, besides that it never was put in execution till then. Several manifestoes were written on both sides of the question; but those disputes are now at an end, by the posterior execution of that regulation in all occasions of minority, such as that of *Charles IX.* *Louis XIII.* and *Louis XIV.* However, we cannot deny but that the acceptance which was then made of it, is defective in the most essential formality, which ought to have been the acceptance of the states general, or at least that of the peers of *France*, according to the principle of those who associate them in the legislature; since the question was, to know whether the nation was willing to trust its own government in the hands of a child of thirteen years old, naturally incapable of so great a function? Nevertheless, it is certain that there is not the least mention made of them in the enregisterment; and this ought to make us think that the essential right of the peerage was already forgotten, which, as we have seen before, consisted not so much in titles and particular

Letter cular arbitrary prerogatives from the king,
 X. who grants them at present, as in the effective jurisdiction of the high *noblesse* in all matters of government, and in the promulgation of the laws, which, stripped of their suffrages, would not have had sufficient authority.

This remark is so much the more important, because it was in this very reign that the peerage, much the same as we behold it at present, received in some measure its determinate form, with the use of the rights which it has remained in possession of. The registers of the parliament have preserved us two acts that prove it; the first is the order of holding the *bed of justice* the 9th of *December* 1378, where the peers were called for the judgment of *John de Montfort*, called knight, but not long before duke of *Bretagne*; in which we see, 1. the ecclesiastick peers in their usual number and rank; 2. the lay-barons, peers present, *viz.* the duke of *Burgundy*, the duke of *Bourbon*, and the count of *Etampes*, whom I have mentioned already; and 3. the laicks and barons, peers absent, who sent their sufficient excuses; *viz.* the duke of *Anjou*, the duke of *Berry*, the count of *Flanders*, the count of *Alençon*, the countess of *Artois*, and the dutchess of *Orleans*. This makes me judge, that as to the pure and simple legislative

legislative right, the kings pretended, at that time, not to share it with any body ; tho' in the main, we cannot vindicate them from usurpation in that point, as well as in a great many more, considering antient examples related in my former letters, such as that of the *stabilimentum feudorum* in the year 1204 ; the ordinance of majority sufficient for being validly received in appearance before a judge, before the age of twenty-one, in matter of seisin or novelty ; or else that which admitted the great officers of the household to seats in parliament ; and the like of several others. We may even further assert, with a great deal of reason, that this legislative right, such as we see it established from thenceforth in the persons of kings, is not only the source of the multiplicity of ordinances, but the real cause of their inexecution, and the oblivion they fall into in a few years ; not to say any thing of the opposition and contradiction between them : for as they are made without consulting any person, so no order or body in the state has an interest to maintain them. The second of the acts I mentioned, shews that the judicial authority of the peers was then restrained to judging the criminal processes of their equals, when they had committed any great crime against the king and his crown. The fact is thus ; “ The
hing

Letter " king holding his *bed of justice* the 2d
 X. " day of *March* 1386, the peers of
 ~~~~~ " *France* speaking by the mouth of the  
 " duke of *Burgundy*, dean of the peers,  
 " before the king's attorney general had  
 " made any requisition, set forth that in  
 " the trial of the duke of *Bretagne*, in the  
 " life-time of the late king *Charles*, to  
 " which the years were adjourned, the  
 " latter maintained before the king, that  
 " the decision, determination, and judg-  
 " ment of the cause belonged to them,  
 " requiring that letters should be granted  
 " them to that effect; or else, if the king  
 " persisted in his resolution to determine the  
 " cause, and give judgment by an *arrêt*,  
 " that letters should likewise be granted  
 " them, specifying that it is without any  
 " prejudice to them, and without any  
 " new right being acquired by the king  
 " on that account: which letters having  
 " been granted them by word of mouth,  
 " were, nevertheless, not expedited;  
 " wherefore they demand the record of  
 " those who were present, the cardinal  
 " *de Laon*, monsieur *d'Orgemont*, *Arnaud*  
 " *de Corbie*, the sieur *de la Baune*, and  
 " *Stephen de la Grange* president. And  
 " moreover, that in the letters to be gi-  
 " ven them, there be a clause inserted,  
 " that the prosecution carried on against  
 " the king of *Navarre*, without their in-  
 " tervention,



“tervention, should not be of any pre-  
“judice to their right; which being grant-  
“ed them, by the general advice of the  
“king’s council, in consequence of the  
“notoriety, the letters were ordered to  
“be dispatched.” Now it is easy to see  
by this request, to what limits the peers re-  
strained their right, however great and  
powerful they were at that time: which  
justifies more and more what I have suf-  
ficiently proved already; viz. that igno-  
rance has been the cause of the destruc-  
tion and ruin of all conditions amongst us,  
as well of the highest as the middling;  
and that it is true, that the kings have  
always watched, either by themselves, or  
by their ministers, to take advantage of the  
faults, mistakes, and inattention of all their  
subjects.

In fine, *Charles V.* ended his life and  
government the 16th of *September 1380.*  
Death was bitter to him more than one  
way; because he not only suffered great  
pain in his body, but also laboured under  
as great anxiety of mind: he was leaving  
his eldest son, in his 12th year, in the  
hands of his four uncles, three paternal and  
one maternal, in all whom he could re-  
pose no confidence, except the last, who  
was the duke of *Bourbon*. Nevertheless,  
the rank and birth of the others necessari-  
ly calling them to the government of the  
Vol. II. H state,

*Charles  
V. his  
death.*

Letter state, he was a long time considering how to  
 X. exclude them : however, as he was an ene-  
 my to violent resolutions, he contented him-  
 self with verbally intrusting the dukes of  
*Burgundy* and *Bourbon* with his last inten-  
 tions; flattering himself that the former  
 would call to mind the infinite personal  
 obligations he owed him : nevertheless, he  
 left the education and guardianship of his  
 children to the duke of *Bourbon*, and dyed,  
 committing the rest to destiny, which was  
 to dispose of it without his participation.



LETTER



L E T T E R X I.

*Reign of Charles VI. Assembly of the Notables in the year 1380. States at Compeigne in 1382. Ordinance for the regency in 1407. States at Paris 1412. Other states at Paris in 1402. Arrêt of condemnation against the dauphin, and his regency. Observations on the coins, and on the life of Charles VII.*

**B**EING now to speak of the most deplorable reign that *France* had labour'd under during the third race, I may, perhaps, be thought to stop too often, and dwell too long on the disgraces of the state; and that it would be more useful to give such a preference to the agreeable subjects which prosperity affords. Nevertheless, if it be true that the horror of discord more powerfully brings back people's minds to the love of order and reason, we may hope that the reflections arising from the history of *Charles VI.* will render us more attentive to the spectacle, with which the ambition of private persons and intestine divisions present us in it; and at the same time better disposed

Letter  
XI.  
Charles  
VI. his  
reign.



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XI.

to relish the advantages of this age, where-  
in the authority of the monarch, and the  
obedience of the subject, have procured us  
interior tranquility, in spite of several sig-  
nal disgraces of fortune. Amongst all the  
changes, which the long duration of a  
monarchy renders in some measure neces-  
sary, and history sets before us for exam-  
ples, *France* never saw so great and wo-  
ful an one, as when the government pas-  
sed from *Charles V.* surnamed *the Wise*  
by way of excellence, into the hands of his  
son, an infant, and in process of time a  
madman. We sufficiently know what the  
dangers and inconveniences of a minori-  
ty generally are, and consequently, what  
those of a guardianship of forty years must  
have been. Nevertheless, the evil proceed-  
ed not so much from this unfortunate  
disposition of the king's person, as from  
the characters of the princes then living,  
whose dignity called them to the govern-  
ment. We may say in general terms, that  
there was not one of them that had an up-  
right intention, or any real love for his  
country ; so that having no other thoughts  
than how to take advantage of every con-  
juncture for their own private interest, for  
plundering the state, enriching themselves  
by all possible means, and strengthening  
themselves by each other's assistance, such  
a general desolation was the consequence  
of

of their conduct, that in the beginning of the year 1420, it was past all hopes of repair. We likewise observe, that the favourites and ministers who started up in this confusion, were almost all of them fellows of Fortune's making, possessed with the same passions of avarice and ambition, and, above all things, blind, in a manner almost incredible, in all their designs: from whence we may lay it down as a maxim, that during this fatal reign no patriot was born, or at least none appeared; or, that if there were any, they immediately fell a sacrifice to faction. Let us now proceed to the detail.

Letter  
XI.

*Charles V.* is reproachable in two things; Charles the first, for carrying the imposts too high, *V. is re-* towards the end of his reign, without any *proached* real necessity; for tho' they were paid *with ha-* willingly enough in his life-time, or at *ving levi-* least without any scandalous tumult, yet *ed too* his eyes were no sooner closed, than *many* cardinal *imposts.* *John de la Grange*, bishop of *Amiens*, who had been his principal minister in that respect, found himself loaded with the publick indignation, and even with that of his successor. It is well known, that money is the sinew of states; but it is not yet decided, whether it is better that the prince should draw it entirely into his own coffers, by exhausting the private resources, than to leave

Letter

XI.



And not  
taking  
measures  
for re-  
moving  
the duke  
of Anjou  
far from  
the go-  
vernment

the people rich, and govern them in such a manner, that he may be sure of their disposition to sacrifice their riches for the necessities of the government. Of two examples of this kind, with which the history of *France* presents us, *Charles V.* gave the first; for tho' he was good, just, and moderate, yet he listened so far to the suggestions of the wicked priest, who had the management of his finances, that he amass'd an immense treasure at the expence of his subjects. But providence did not suffer it to go into the hands of his son, for whom he designed it; but delivered it up to the man of whom he had the greatest distrust, as I shall shew immediately. The second example, is that of *Louis XII.* who, warned by that event, chose rather to leave his treasure in the purses of his subjects; and his successor had the advantage of finding therein a prodigious resource, when his own and his children's ransoms were to be paid. *Charles* the Vth's second fault was in the want of courage to take proper measures for keeping the duke of *Anjou* at a distance from the government, to which he aspired with no other view than that of plundering at pleasure. A dying monarch, indeed, ought to keep some measures with his relations, and give as little occasion as possible to revolts and civil wars; especially when



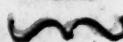
when he leaves his heir under age : but, Letter  
on the other hand, how can we imagine XI.  
that so wise a prince as *Charles* was, who  
had made it a maxim of policy to heap  
up a treasure, in order to preserve it for  
his son, could afterwards leave it at the  
disposal of a stranger, whom he ought to  
have foreseen, and did in reality foresee,  
would dissipate it, contenting himself with  
the bare precaution of burying that trea-  
sure ? But these are some of those blows  
of fate, which shew the insufficiency of  
every thing that can be called human pru-  
dence.

The new king was not yet quite twelve  
years old, and consequently the new law  
concerning the majority, served only to  
secure the regency the better : so the  
duke of *Anjou*, whose quality of the el-  
dest of the late king's brothers was suf-  
ficient to put him in possession of it, did  
not delay taking it upon himself, without  
consulting any body. He caused a report  
to be spread, that the king, in his last  
moments, had confirmed an antient dispo-  
sition, which he had made in his favour, on  
that subject : but the dukes of *Burgundy* and  
*Bourbon*, who were in the late king's se-  
cret, took such proper measures, that the  
duke of *Anjou*, tho' regent, found him-  
self without authority. However, re-  
solving to support his attempt, he order'd

*The duke  
of Anjou  
assumes  
the regen-  
cy.*

*Which is  
disputed  
with him.*

Letter the march of some troops which he had  
 XI. made sure of, and posted them in the  
 neighbourhood of *Paris*. His competitors  
 did as much on their side; so that a civil  
 war was on the point of breaking out,  
 when the magistrates of *Paris*, and the  
 clergy then in that city, undertook to re-  
 concile them. For that purpose a grand  
 council was assembled in the palace, com-  
 posed, according to the expression of the  
 great chronicle, of the prelates, barons,  
 men of learning and experience that were  
 then in *Paris*, and a few *notables* taken from  
 among the presidents of the chambers of  
 the parliament; before whom each party  
 proposed his reasons. Those of the duke  
 of *Anjou* were set forth by *John des Maretz*,  
 advocate general of the parliament; and  
 those of the princes by *Peter d'Orgement*,  
 who was soon after made chancellor. The  
 author of the life of *Charles VI.* translated  
 by *M. le Laboureur*, says, that the neces-  
 sity of the times did not permit the af-  
 fairs to be treated according to all the  
 rules; and makes no mention of a com-  
 promise, which the other authors have  
 given for certain, on the testimony of  
*Juvenal des Ursins*, and which carries  
 but little probability in it: on the con-  
 trary, he says, that every body acquiesced  
 in the opinion of the advocate-general,  
 which was to crown the king forthwith,  
 with-

without amusing themselves in disput- Letter  
ing the regency, which could not be va- XI.  
lidly contested with the duke of *Anjou*;   
and that when the king should be deem-  
ed vested with all his power, the princes  
his uncles should take the places and  
rank in the council which ought to be-  
long to them: the whole, without pre-  
judice to the late king's order, for the e-  
ducation of his children. The act of  
this resolution, and the king's emancipa-  
tion, made by his guardian the duke of *Anjou*, is dated the 2d of *October* 1380, *The coun-  
cil decides*  
and passed in parliament, in presence of it.  
the duke of *Anjou* regent, the dukes of  
*Berry* and *Burgundy* his brothers, and  
the duke of *Bourbon*, all uncles to the  
king; queen *Blanche*, the king's grand-  
mother; the dutchess of *Orleans*; the  
count of *Eu*, and *Charles* of *Artois* his  
brother; the count of *Tancarville*; the  
count of *Harcourt*, likewise uncle to the  
king by his wife *Catharine* of *Bourbon*;  
the count of *Sancerre*; the count of *Breme*,  
of the name of *Roban*; the king of *Na-  
varre*'s eldest son; the archbishops of  
*Rouen*, *Rheims*, and *Sens*; the bishops of  
*Laon*, *Beauvais*, *Agen*, *Paris*, *Langres*,  
*Bayeux*, *Therouanne*, *Evreux*, *Meaux*, and  
*Chartres*, with several other barons and  
prelates. Observe three singularities in  
this act: first, the king's emancipation;  
which,



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which, consequently, shews that he is subject to the laws as well as other people, whatever modern writers say of the matter : 2. the precedency of the barons above the prelates ; and 3. the precedency of the four counts, gentlemen, before the king of *Navarre's* son, heir to a crown, and head of a branch of the house of *France*. I might likewise observe, that the bishops that were peers had no particular rank in it.

Charles  
VI. is  
crowned,  
and con-  
vokes the  
states-  
general.

I shall not stop here, either to relate what the duke of *Anjou* did during the rest of the month that he continued regent, or to give you an account of the means by which he took away the late king's treasure ; nor shall I enter into a detail of the seditions and popular tumults in every place of the kingdom, to shake off the yoke of the imposts they groaned under. The king was crowned the 1st of *November* following ; but the seditions did not cease until a declaration of the king and his council was obtained for suppressing those taxes. However, that declaration was no sooner granted, but the princes, who thought themselves impoverished by such an easiness in the king, made instances to the council, to get the imposts re-established ; and several negotiations were set on foot by them in the provinces, to prevail upon the people to submit to the yoke with

with a good grace. Nevertheless, finding that no methods could prevail upon them, they persuaded the king to convoke the states-general at *Compeigne* for the 15th of April, 1382. The king, who was then really major according to the new law, opened the session himself, with the princes and lords of his council. *Arnaud de Corbie*, first president of the parliament, displayed his eloquence in it, and set forth the justice of the demand, for continuing the war and the pay of the gendarmery. His first argument was, that the reigning king having the same dominions to defend, and the same enemies that his father had to deal with, the same assistance could not be denied him. From this first sitting they passed to the private negotiations for gaining the deputies; but all to little purpose: for their last answer was, that they were sent by their constituents only to hear the king's intention, and to make a report of it, without any further power. Nevertheless, most of them offered to do their utmost for his satisfaction, and promised to bring back an answer within a certain time. Some of them, indeed, came; but it was only to assure the king, the princes, and the council, that the people were resolved rather to suffer themselves to be cut to pieces, than consent to the re-establishment of the taxes lately

Letter  
XI.

*Demands  
the conti-  
nuation of  
the taxes,  
which is  
denied  
him.*

Letter lately suppressed ; and in particular the  
 XI. deputy for the province of *Sens* having  
 brought back a consent, when the court  
 went to make use of it, in order to establish the necessary offices, the people rose up in arms ; so that the court looked upon it to be no proper time for pressing them any farther.

*The king  
 re-estab-  
 lishes  
 them by  
 force.*

The *Flanders* war, and the victory at *Rosebeque*, served very opportunely : for the king and the princes made so great an advantage of it, that having entered *Paris* sword in hand, and disarmed the people, they made a terrible example of severity, of which it is needless to give a detail in this place ; since it is sufficient to know that the aids, and all the imposts were re-established by full royal authority, and that *France* was treated like a conquered country : the army having served, as they always do, to subdue and enslave the rest of their fellow-subjects, in hopes of some present advantage ; without considering that, when tired with the trade, they would be glad to retire and sit down in the usual and common stations of life, others, who succeed them, will enslave them in their turn, according to the same example. A reward as just as it is infallible, and which people never think of. What account shall I give of the rest of this unfortunate reign?



reign? The king's youth passed away under the guardianship of his uncles, and the authority of his favourites; the middle and end of his life in fits of a violent frenzy, which gave him no respite, unless to leave him in a melancholy weakness of body and mind. You may then easily judge, that in such circumstances and dispositions, the strongest and the wickedest men had always the opportunity to rob him with impunity, to plunder the people, to grant favours to such miscreants as themselves, to assassinate, poison, and cut off the innocent in what manner they pleased; in a word, to destroy and ruin every thing. Thus never had the state been in so violent and so cruel a situation. The duke of *Orleans*, the king's own brother, and the constable *de Clifson*, the first officer of the crown, were murdered with impunity in *Paris*, and almost under the eye of the king himself; two dauphins were successively poisoned, and the third disinherited by a declaration confirmed by an *arrêt*; the king of *England* received and crowned in *Paris*; all good *Frenchmen* massacred, banished, and stripped of their estates. Such was the deplorable condition to which private interest had reduced this fine kingdom in a few years.

Letter  
XI.

*Dismal  
state of  
the king-  
dom.*

Never-

Letter

XI.

*The king  
holds a  
bed of  
justice  
for regu-  
lating re-  
gencies.*

Nevertheless, in the midst of so many disasters, vices, and corruptions, some salutary ordinances were made now and then ; though perhaps the good of the state was the least of the motives of those who proposed them. Of this number was that of the twenty-sixth of *December*, 1407, soon after the death of the duke of *Orleans*, which was made in order to settle definitively the affair of regencies. In that ordinance, *Charles VI.* orders that wardship, nourishment, and affairs of kings under fourteen years of age, shall be committed to the queens their mothers, if living, and to the nearest of the lineage and royal blood of *France*, who shall then be assisted by the constable, the chancellor, and the wise men of the deceased king's council. We see very well that this law was made in favour of queen *Isabella* of *Bavaria*, who having a great many young children, and a husband whose health was very much impaired, flattered herself with the hopes of soon having the whole authority in her own hands by his death. This act contains, that it was read and published in parliament, the king holding his *bed of justice*; present the king of *Sicily*, the dukes of *Guienne*, *Berry*, *Bourbon*, and *Bavaria*; the counts of *Mortain*, *Nevers*, *Alençon*, *Clermont*, *Vendosme*, *St. Pol*, *Tancarville*,  
and

and several counts, barons, and lords of the royal blood, and others; the constable; the chancellor, who is mentioned in this act; the archbishops of *Sens* and *Besançon*; the bishops of *Auxerre*, *Angers*, *Evreux*, *Poitiers*, *Gap*; with a great number of abbots and churchmen; the grand master of the household, who was *John de Montaign*; the first, and the other presidents in the parliament; several chamberlains; a great number of knights, and other nobles; counsellors both of the great council and the parliament, of the chamber of accounts, the requests, the *Hotel of enquestes*, and requests of the palace, the aids and the treasury; and other officers and lawyers, and a great multitude of other persons.

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You may perhaps be tired with my perpetual repetitions of the order of the fittings on every occasion: nevertheless, I think it so much the more necessary, that without it there is no forming a just idea of the rank due to every member of the state. It even evidently appears, that, on the one hand, the confusion which reigns at present, and on the other, the usurpation of the magistracy on the precdency of the *noblesse*, proceeds but from the neglect of giving due attention to past examples. Now it is certain, that we find no *bed of justice*, in which the ranks are so plainly

*The author's reflections on the order of this session*



Letter plainly expressed, and so justly distributed

XI. as in this; and, consequently, that there  
is not any one that can more properly serve  
as a rule. We may observe in it, 1. That the princes and the high *noblesse* hold their natural rank above the clergy; and that is generally seen in all the acts of this reign, and in some of those made in the latter. 2. That the lords of the royal blood, who were not chiefs of branches, are confounded with the high *noblesse*, counts, barons, and other lords: a custom which has changed since. The change began immediately after the extinction of so many collateral branches, when *Henry III.* and the states held at *Blois* in 1576, saw the danger the crown was in of being invaded by foreigners: but of which it may be said, that the haughtiness and the distinctions practised in our days, are not just consequences. 3. That the first and the other presidents of the parliament hold their rank after the ecclesiasticks, and by themselves, without mixing with the *noblesse*. 4. That the king's chamberlains, who were properly the nursery of favourites, take place next with the knights and *noblesse* of the second order; which does not signify an inferiority of birth and origin, but rather that of riches, possessions, or employments, which have distinguished mankind in all ages. 5. That after them

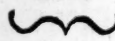
them come the counsellors of all the different tribunals, who did not yet pretend to the precedency. We do not find here any rank for the ennobled, though there was then a vast number of them who had purchased that privilege with their money. *Charles V.* in particular had communicated it to several inferior officers of his household, and of the courts of judicature: for in those days, neither the post of chancellor, nor president, were deemed capable of conferring nobility: and we have still in the registers the ennoblements of the famous cardinal *de la Forest*, *William de Dormans*, and *Arnaud de Corbie*, chancellors; of *Simon de Bury*, first president, of the *Braques*, the *Dauvets*, and several others: but we see in this place another abuse in the person of the high steward of the household, a man of the meanest extraction, whom fortune raised to the rank of a great officer of the crown.

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XI.  
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After the peace of *Bourges*, or *Auxerre*, the king, being come back to *Paris*, quite destitute of money through the expences of the war, in which the duke of *Burgundy* had engaged him, against his uncle the duke of *Berry*, and the house of *Orleans*, had notice of an approaching invasion from the *English*, which was to be conducted by the duke of *Charente*, governor of *Guienne*. The dread of that

The king convokes the states-general in order to gain the people's consent for new taxes.

Letter war, which had not yet broke out, though

XI.  it was apprehended ever-since the beginning of this reign, served as a pretext to convoke the states-general, the end of which was to make the people consent to suffer new impositions. The resolution for forming this assembly was no sooner taken, than that, according to the *French* custom, they would have had it begun, and in way of being concluded; so much success did they promise themselves from the strength of the arguments they were to make use of in order to persuade the deputies. Couriers were dispatched to all the provinces and head places of bailiwicks, with pressing orders to chuse their deputies: but notwithstanding all their diligence, the assembly was not opened till the 30th of *January*, 1412-13, in the *Hotel* of *St. Paul*, in the gallery of the palace; the hall being thought too little to contain so great a multitude. It is pity that the detail of the ranks, and the form of the deliberations, have not been preserved by the anonymous writer who gives the account of that assembly. All we can learn from him, is, that it was opened in presence of the king and all the princes, except the duke of *Berry*, who was then very ill, by *John de Nesle* chancellor of *Guienne*, who in his speech exaggerated the advantages of the new peace, the generous affection of

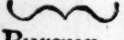
*Representations
made in
it for the
king.*

of the king, who exposed his person, and put himself to an extreme expence in order to procure it. He spoke of the war with which the *English* threatened *France*, and the shame of not making an effort in order to repulse so inveterate an enemy; and concluded with telling them, that all the former expences were nothing in comparison to those required at present; the necessity of which, as well as the estimate of the sum, the king left to their consideration; wherefore the king allowed them six days to deliberate. The expressions in this speech were so haughty and so ill-chosen for reconciling people's minds, that it immediately disgusted every body: nevertheless, the assembly met at *St. Paul's* on the appointed day. The deputy of *Rheims* spoke the first, with a much more becoming eloquence: after displaying his rhetoric in encomiums on the king, and the princes, for concluding the peace, he gave as great praise to the zeal and fidelity of the people, who had sustained insupportable charges for so many years; he conjured the king, by his natural benignity, and tenderness for his subjects, to have compassion on the common misery, and believe that the province he spoke for, was unable to furnish the least sum of money. The deputy of *Rouen* made another speech as moving, and concluded it by demon-

Letter
XI.

*For the
province
of
Rheims.*

*For that
of Rouen*

Letter XI.  strating that it was no difficult matter to find out other resources for easing the people. But the next day the abbot *du Montier St. John*, deputy of *Burgundy*, spoke with more boldness against the collectors of the former imposts, and the managers of the king's finances, and was listened to with extreme attention: he described their insatiable avarice, their rigour, their roguery, and the wicked methods they made use of for plundering the king's subjects, or diverting the ordinary course of the sums which ought to come into the king's coffers: he proved with the same evidence, that the king had a right to take back what they had diverted and embezzled to their own profit; shewing that the sums arising from thence would suffice for all the necessary expences. The 9th of *February* the university of *Paris* deputed *Benedict Gentier*, one of their doctors, to speak for them: he was a religious of the abby of *St. Denis*, and brother to the provost of the merchants: his charge was violently to attack the financiers, and he said part of what was necessary: but it appeared that he was afraid of giving any noted and unprofitable offence to great men in power, whose vengeance might prejudice his family and himself: however, he could not avoid the blame of having too openly pointed at the duke of *Burgundy*,

For the
university
of Paris.

Burgundy, in speaking of the violences committed. The deputies of *Sens* and *Bourges*, who spoke next, also concluded in conjuring the king to be merciful, and spare a wretched people. The princes had already taken their resolution on the inutility of this convocation: wherefore they ordered the chancellor of *France* to tell the assembly, that the king, being touched with the representations made to him by the deputies of the states, consented to grant them the repose they demanded, and would cause his letters-patents to be dispatched on that head, which should be sent to them at their respective places of abode, whither he ordered them to repair.

Letter
XI.

And for
the cities
of Sens
and
Bourges.

In this manner was that great assembly dismissed, to the little satisfaction of all parties: but its dissolution was hastened the more, because the ministers apprehended that animosities would succeed to complaints; and that the states in a body might demand their punishment. They then thought they had laid the storm by sending back those poor deputies, who were in haste to return home, in order to spare charges: but another storm was gathering, which it was not in their power to avert. The university of *Paris*, dissatisfied with their first orator, ardently sued for a new audience of the king;

The as-
sembly is
dismissed.

Letter which the ministers dared not to refuse:

XI. a *Carmelite* friar was their speaker this time, who spoke with more heat than generosity, though the duke of *Burgundy* was present; and concluded by demanding that the remonstrances of the university might be heard; which being granted, the rector caused a memorial to be read, the substance of which *le Laboureur's* anonymous author has preserved, and from whence we learn several important facts.

Observations on a memorial presented to the king by the university of Paris.

The first I remark as necessary to our subject, is that the magnificent expence of *Charles* the fifth's household, of the queen, and the children of *France*, was fixed at 94,000 gold *francs* of 63 to the mark, which made about 1500 marks; and that 450,000 of those *francs* had been expended for the household of *Charles VI.* amounting to 7000 marks of gold; a prodigious sum! which was nevertheless so embezzled by his officers, that his subjects had the mortification to see both him, the queen, the duke of *Guienne* his eldest son, and his other children, in want of necessities. The second concerns the detail of the violence and extortions practised by the king's officers; among whom the chancellor *Arnaud de Corbie*, *Raimond Raguier*, *John Pidoc*, *Poupart*, *William Prude*, the sire of *Fontenay*, *Peter* and *Anthony des Effarts*, the first of whom was

was provost of *Paris*, are named, with a Letter great many more, whose families are little known at present, as well on account of the change of name which some of them affected, as because of the usual disguise in *France*, where, for a long time past, families are generally more known by the name of their lands or possessions. The rest of that piece contains a great number of remarkable facts for comparing the customs of the times: but as a detail of them would be too long, I shall content myself with observing, that the conclusion of this assembly invincibly demonstrates the right of the states-general concerning the imposts; but that the terms made use of by the deputies, *viz.* those of *demanding the compassion and mercy of the prince, of having recourse to his justice and benignity*, so weakened it, that soon after some people dared to sustain, that the states had no other right than that of making most humble remonstrances, and that it was in the king's power to shew what regard he pleased to them. We may likewise observe the manner in which the speeches of the deputies are related: for the abbot *du Moutier St. John*, though evidently of the body of the clergy, is only called deputy for the province of *Burgundy*; from whence we must infer that the deputations were then made by provinces,

Letter vinces, and not in three distinct chambers
 XI. for the three representative bodies of the
 ~~~~~ clergy, *nobleſſe*, and the third eſtate: a  
 custom much more proper for diſcuſſing  
 affairs, and forming the moſt uſeful reſo-  
 lutions, and conſequently more ſuitable to  
 publick and private good; and which as  
 ſuch was preſerved a long time, for it was  
 ſtill exiſting and practiſed with a high  
 hand, in the aſſembly held at *Tours* in the  
 year 1483.

*Effect of  
 the repre-  
 ſentations  
 made to  
 the king.*

Moreover, I muſt not forget to tell you,  
 that the juſt representations of the ſtates I  
 am ſpeaking of, and much more thoſe of  
 the univerſity, which gave room to appre-  
 hend an inſurrection in *Paris*, prevailed  
 upon the court to turn out the officers and  
 financiers, againſt whom complaints were  
 made, except the chancellor, who was  
 kept in his poſt in conſideration of his  
 great age and long ſervices: and, in fine,  
 that commiſſioners were choſen out of the  
 body of the ſtates, though without their  
 participation, in order to labour ſeriously  
 towards the deſired reformation. The  
 commiſſioners, who afterwards neglected  
 their functions, were of the order of the  
 clergy, the biſhop of *Tournay*, the abbot  
*du Moutier St. John*, the king's almoner,  
 and his confeſſor; of the *nobleſſe*, the lords  
 of *Offemont*, *Mouy*, *Souecourt*, *Marn*,  
 and the *Vidame* of *Amiens*; and of the  
 third



third estate, two counsellors of the parliament, named *Petit Seine & Longueil*, *Peter Cauchon*, a member of the university, who became bishop of *Beauvais*, and more famous for having prosecuted the \* *Maid of Orleans* under the domination of the *English*; and *John de l'Olive*, an alderman of the city of *Paris*. Those dispositions, which appeared the finest in the world, nevertheless came to nothing; because sedition began afresh, with as much, or rather more, violence than ever, through the imprudence and cruelty of the princes who gave rise to them.

The then reigning king of *England*, being young, ambitious, and full of courage, but on the other hand not very well settled in the throne, to which he had not the least right, thought that the most proper method to maintain himself in it was to take advantage of the disposition of his people, and employ them in a war against *France*. Happily for him, and unfortunately for this kingdom, the duke of *Burgundy* was then in the king's disgrace, which prevailed upon him to seek the assistance of *England*, with whom he began to treat in the year 1414, yet without any conclusion until the month of *August* 1417,

Letter  
XI.

The duke  
of Bur-  
gundy  
joins with  
the king of  
England  
again the  
dauphin.

\* *Joanne d'Arc, Pucelle d'Orleans, who turned the scale against the English in France.*

when

Letter when he made a first treaty of truce, not-

XI. withstanding the resentment which he feigned for the death of his brothers killed at *Agincourt* in 1415, and for the great wound which *France* received in that battle, no less fatal to her than those of *Cressy* and *Poitiers*. After the treaty, the king of *England* and the duke having had a conference together, the latter filled up the measure of his iniquity by an act which remained concealed till this century, when it was brought to light by the publication of the charters of the kingdom of *England*. That prince sets forth in the said act, that having till then misunderstood, and being ignorant of the king of *England*'s true right to the crown of *France*, for want of good information on that head, he declares, that having taken cognizance of it, he acknowledges it to be just and legitimate ; promises and obliges himself to make a mortal war against *Charles*, who styles himself king of *France*, and his son (at that time the dauphin *Charles*, afterwards the seventh king of that name, called from *Touraine* before the death of his brothers) submits himself to perform liege homage to the said king as soon as he shall be in possession of the kingdom, or part of it ; acknowledging that tho' that homage was then due, it had been delayed for the greater advantage of both : in fine, he

Particulars of their treaty.

he declares, that if hereafter he should be obliged to make any treaty, alliance, or conventions with the adversary of *France*, or his son, it shall still be without any prejudice to the present acknowledgment, the execution of which he will fulfil on the loyalty of his body, and upon the faith and word of a prince. Written and signed with his own hand, and sealed with his privy seal, at *Calais*, in the month of *October*: the year is in blank. That piece is not quite foreign to our subject, tho' it should be of no further service than to shew us the character of the prince who disturbed *France* in so horrid a manner, from the year 1404, to the 10th of *September* 1419, when the dauphin's ministers got rid of him by an assassination on the bridge of *Montereau*. The consequence of this treaty was a formal invasion of *France* by the king of *England*; who, having entered *Normandy*, conquered that province foot by foot, and by his league with the *Burgundians*, came at last to be acknowledged regent of the kingdom, and successor to the crown of *France*, as it is stipulated by the treaty of *Troyes* of the 12th of *May* 1418, to the exclusion of the dauphin, who was declared unworthy, and fallen from the succession, and afterwards condemned to banishment by an *arrêt* of the month of *January* following,

Letter  
XI.

on



Letter on the pursuit of *Nicolas Raulin*, afterwards the famous chancellor of *Burgundy*.

The kings  
of France  
and Eng-  
land con-  
voke an  
assembly.

A little before this horrid condemnation, which will be an eternal stigma on the parliament, these two kings of *France* and *England* had called the states-general of the provinces under their subjection ; for half the kingdom held for the dauphin, besides several places still in his hands in the isle of *France*, *Picardy*, *Normandy*, *Anjou*, &c. The assembly was opened in the hall of the *Hotel St. Paul*, on the 6th of *December* 1420, in presence of the two kings, with a speech made by *John le Clerc*, a violent partisan for the faction of *Burgundy* ; in which, after deploring the massacre of duke *John*, he shewed the advantage of the treaty of *Troyes*, and the good fortune which had followed the union of the two kings, in the conquest of different places ; and concluded, by demanding an aid for continuing the war against the dauphin : he likewise remonstrated that the coins were considerably weakened since the misfortune of the civil wars, which could not fail to cause a great disadvantage to the publick, if the states did not speedily make a sufficient order for restoring them to the value. In fact, the king of *England* had already formed his scheme in regard to the imposition he wanted to lay, and

and was resolved to take it out of the coin, by obliging all persons in easy circumstances, of what condition soever, to bring to the mint a certain quantity of silver in marks, to be there converted into specie, and the price paid at the rate of seven *livres* the mark, instead of eight, which was the common value of it: so that by this means he promised himself a real profit of one eighth of all that should be brought to the mint, and that was his view of making his orator speak of the lowness of the coin. The deputies of the states having heard the proposition, retired from the presence of the kings, only for form-sake, that it might appear they had put something under debate; after which, having resumed their seats, they made answer by one of their members, that they were ready to do whatever the king and his council pleased to order; avoiding to enter into any detail. Upon this, letters patents were immediately expedited in the name of king *Charles*, with the advice of his dear son the king of *England*, regent and heir of *France*, containing, that according to the resolution of the three estates, an imposition of a certain quantity of silver marks should be laid in all the good substantial towns, upon persons in easy circumstances, and others, of whatever condition they might be; which should be carried

Letter carried to the mint, and paid in specie at  
 XI. the rate of seven *livres* the mark: this, according to the testimony of *Juvenal des Ursins*, was a very heavy *taille*; against which, however, there was no opposition made; so efficacious are feat and force.

Nevertheless, they did not stop there; for under colour that this tax, made by way of *loan*, had been of no other service than restoring the coin to its true value, a new ordinance was published the 21st of *April* following, for re-establishing the aid, as if it had been a consequence of the deliberation of the states.

*Means made use of by the dauphin for maintaining the war.*

In the mean time, the dauphin, who on his side had assumed the title and quality of regent of the kingdom, from the 24th of *June* 1418, not only without the institution of the states or the parliament, but even against the declared will of his father, was himself in possession of the provinces on the other side of the *Loire*, and his captains held several places on this side of that river, where the war was maintained on the defensive. The *arrêt* issued against him by the parliament of *Paris*, occasioned his publishing an ordinance, whereby he broke that tribunal, and likewise the university, and ordered for the future both should be held at *Poitiers*: supposing that neither of them could be free in a rebel city, subject to the antient enemy  
 of



of *France*, On the other hand, he did Letter  
all that lay in his power to support him- XI.  
self; but his revenues were so short, that  
he could scarce find wherewithal for his  
necessary expences. Nevertheless, his mi-  
nisters prevailed upon him to make use of  
a method, which preserved him in the se-  
quel; whereas, in any other circumstances  
but his, it is the infallible ruin of a state:  
this was to weaken the coin, by which the  
value of the silver mark was raised from  
nine to ninety *livres*, while the coin of  
*Paris* passed for seven, or seven and a half;  
so that the profit on bringing good specie  
into the dauphin's provinces, prevailed up-  
on all the merchants to go thither: and this  
is what the king of *England*, in the name  
of *Charles VI.* bitterly complains of, in  
several declarations which have been hand-  
ed down to us; and, amongst others, in  
that of the 8th of *October* 1421, where  
he sets forth that he, who calls himself  
dauphin, and those of his party, make  
use of great frauds, male-practices, and  
deceits, with an intent to draw the good  
coin to themselves. As to the rest, *le Blanc*  
has shewn in his treatise on that subject,  
that the dauphin not only augmented and  
carried the price of the mark of silver to  
ninety *livres*, and the mark of gold to  
371; but that in converting them into  
specie, he raised them to so great a value,  
that

Letter that he made 270 *livres* profit on the fil-

XI. ver, and 2570 on the gold mark; which  
 in some measure is incredible. And this, without doubt, is the reason that the general farms of the dauphin's mints, viz. *Tours, Chinon, Angers, Poitiers, Rochel, Limoges, St. Pourcain, Lyons, Bourges, Guise, St. Andrew, Beaucaire, Montpellier, Toulouse, le Pont St. Esprit, Cremieu, Romans, Mirabel, Sens, Mouson, and Ville Franche de Rouerque*, adjudged the 8th of *October* 1419, for one year, amounted to 2,160,000 *livres*; while the farm of the mints under the king's obedience, viz. *Paris, Tournay, St. Quintin, Chalons, Troyes, Maçon, Nevers, and Auxerre*, adjudged the 10th of *August* 1420, for the half year, amounted to no more than 600,000 *livres*, including the pot of wine which is specified in it. Such was the miserable situation and doleful state of the kingdom, when the *English* monarch was of a sudden taken ill of a fistula and the gangrene, which carried him off the 30th of *August* 1422; leaving a son about a year old, successor to two kingdoms, under the guardianship of his paternal uncles. The unfortunate *Charles VI.* did not survive him two months, dying the 20th of *October* following.

Death of  
the two  
kings.

I might

I might have lengthened my remarks with some reflections on the antient treaty of *Troyes*, by which that prince acknowledged the king of *England* for his general heir; particularly in regard to the articles which stipulate the liberty of the subject, the rights of the states, the administration of justice, and the preservation of the parliament: but as we cannot draw any right from an act which, on the other hand, violated the fundamental laws of our constitution, I think it more proper to go on to the reign of *Charles VII.* in order to shew, at the end of so deplorable a picture, the most finished model of government, in the person of a king to whose memory but little justice is generally done; because, as we are always *Frenchmen*, that is to say, always giddy-headed and charmed, or rather dazzled with the brilliant qualities of princes, we seldom give any attention to those who are the most useful to us. Humanity, moderation, justice, labour, œconomy, application, joined to true valour, were the qualities acknowledged in the person of *Charles VII.* Indeed he had the blemish of suffering himself to be governed by favourites in his youth, and by a mistress in a more advanced age: however, that flexibility in him is not without its excuse, if we consider, that having been deprived of education, and most cruelly used by all

Letter XI.

*Charles VII. his accession to the crown.*

*That prince's character*



Letter his relations in the sequel of his life, the  
 XI. natural mildness of his temper, which inclined him to friendship, rendered him more easy to be deceived by those who expressed an attachment for him which he might look upon as personal. But in the main, it is certain that this prince never wanted either discernment to know the demerits of his favourites, or resolution to sacrifice his own sentiments, when he thought the publick good required it. Such, for example, was the violence he did himself in removing *Tanneguy du Chastel*, charged with the murder of the duke of *Burgundy*, who had saved his life in the surprize at *Paris*, in the year 1418. He received in his place, from the hands of the constable *de Richemont*, the lord of *Giac*, to govern his household towards the end of the year 1424; and suffered the punishment which the constable inflicted on that lord two years after, tho' with a resentment suitable to the haughty and disrespectful manner, in which that officer of the crown went about it. Much the same was it with one *Camus de Beau-lieu*, whom the king's favour had in three months made forget the consideration and respect due to the great lords of the kingdom. But the constable did much worse, when he obliged the king to take the lord *de la Trimouille* into favour, and entrust him

him with his domestick finances: and it Letter  
is on this occasion that history makes a XI.  
remark, which shews us how much the  
king was superior in discernment to the  
man who tyrannized over him, under the  
pretence of the good of his service; since it  
tells us, that when he accepted *Trimouille*,  
he said to the constable, \* *Fair cousin, you*  
*give him to me, but you'll repent it; for I*  
*know him better than you do.* In fact, no  
minister ever behaved so violently as the  
lord *de la Trimouille* did, or ever expres-  
sed so much ingratitude to his benefactor;  
until he was punished in 1432, by a me-  
thod † which removed him from the  
king's presence during the rest of his  
life.

These different scenes made the mo- *His at-*  
narch, then thirty years old, sensible, at *tachment*  
last, that kings can hardly admit favou- *to Agnes*  
rites without making male-contents, and *Sorel.*  
consequently without exposing their own  
authority and their fortune, especially in  
times of disgrace and trouble. However,  
not being able to constrain his character  
enough to be without the amusements of  
love, he took a mistress called the fair *Ag-*  
*nes Sorel*; to whose sentiments history gives  
such glorious testimonies of courage and

\* *Synonymous then with good in compliments.*

† *This will be cleared up in the sequel.*

Letter elevation of mind, as persuade us that we

XI. are in a great measure indebted to her for the recovery of *France*. Nevertheless, as that prince seemed to have been born to meet with contradiction, his beloved mistress was poisoned, and that too by his own son; who, through a malignity and jealousy, of which we have very few examples, envied the king his father the pleasure of such an amusement: and yet that was not one of those monstrous times in which mistresses were seen to dispose of the riches of the state, as well as of private fortunes, according to their caprice; and wantonly distribute governments, employments, great dignities, and even the peerage itself, by heaping them on their relations, and those who had most assiduously served them in order to obtain those favours. I know not upon what foundation father *Daniel*, in tolerably well defending the memory of this prince against modern injustice, affects to leave him the stain of debauchery, against the testimony of cotemporary historians, and against the very expression of the picture we find drawn of him at the head of *Godefrey's* history, which, in other respects, he looks upon as an original piece, and void of suspicion. Now it seems that nothing is more distant from the character given him than that passion for debauchery, with which

*His vindication  
from debauchery.*



which father *Daniel* charges him. *Charles* the VIIth is drawn in the place I have mentioned as a very serious man, taken up with his duties, an enemy to pomp and ostentation, speaking little, and so far from being addicted to the pleasures and diversions, of which people have the idea at present, that he always eat alone, out of sight of his courtiers, and during his meals some useful lectures, or discourses on the history of the former reigns, were read to him. We moreover see in it, that this prince rose early, and employed the whole day in the affairs of the government; reserving but a part of every *Thursday* for his recreation. Other historians tell us, that when he wanted relaxation from business, he went into the queen's apartment, where the company of the ladies, and sometimes that of the fair *Agnes*, amused him a few moments. But can this be given out for a debauched life, or even for an irregular passion, since he concealed the fruits of that only love-intrigue he ever had, with so much precaution and modesty, that of three daughters he had by *Agnes*, who were brought up far from the court, he married but one in his lifetime, to *Oliver de Cotivi*, seneschal of *Guyenne*, to whom he gave 12,000 crowns for her portion, with a stipulation, that it was as a reward for the services of the late

Letter *Tanneguy du Châtel*, uncle to the future

XI. husband? The examples of the following  
 reigns are, indeed, so different from what  
 we are speaking of, both as to the number  
 and scandal of mistresses, and the effects  
 of their intrigues, that father *Daniel* must  
 certainly have very superficially consider-  
 ed the matter, when he thought the  
 glory of *Charles VII.* tarnished by so slight  
 a fault. As to the weakness which this  
 prince is accused of, it seems to me an-  
 other injustice done him in that article;  
 since those who accuse him, neglect the  
 consideration and circumstances of the af-  
 fairs he was engaged in. The rigidity and  
 haughtiness of the constable *de Richemont*  
 were certainly very opposite to the mild-  
 ness and modesty of his character; but he  
 was obliged either to bear with them, or  
 lose the hopes of regaining his kingdom:  
 and we know how much the misunder-  
 standing fomented between them for sever-  
 al years together, by the lord *de la Tri-*  
*mouille*, under a pretext of maintaining  
 the king's authority, was prejudicial to his  
 cause. Moreover, the portrait of him  
 which I have already cited, precisely shews,  
 that *Charles* the VIIth pardoned freely  
 and generously, but that his friendship and  
 confidence once wounded were never re-  
 gained.

And  
 weakness.

What

What shall I say farther in regard to the Letter  
 administration of justice in general; the **XI.**  
 particular order he established concerning  
 the soldiery, as well for their service as for *Encomi-*  
 their regular pay; the choice of their of- *um on his*  
 ficers of all degrees; the firmness with *admini-*  
 which he suppressed the motions of some *stration.*  
 rebels, and prevented the efforts of the e-  
 vil designs of his son and the duke of *A-*  
*lençon*; the happiness of his people, whom  
 he enriched before his death, having con-  
 stantly protected them against the oppres-  
 sion of the wicked, but still without pul-  
 ling down the nobility, as some princes  
 did afterwards? Can we discover in this re-  
 cital the character of a weak unintelligent  
 prince? or rather shall we not acknow-  
 ledge that our taste must be entirely cor-  
 rupted, if we prefer the vanity of some  
 of his successors to virtues so great, and at  
 the same time so useful to a whole state?  
 Father *Daniel* further treats as a weakness, Charles  
 and even as a disorder of the brain, to VII. ac-  
 which some princes of the house of *Valois* *cused with*  
 were indeed subject, the caprice to which *little foun-*  
 the cause of his death is generally attributed; *dation of*  
*viz.* to an unreasonable fear of being poi- *having*  
 soned; in consequence of which he *been the*  
 deprived himself of all manner of nourish- *real cause*  
 ment for several days together: so that *of his own*  
 when he would have taken to it again, na- *death.*  
 ture being too much weakened, could not



Letter exercise its functions. But may it not be

XI. said that this author has given too much credit to the reports spread in those days, and which have been even transmitted to us by the petty historians that writ his life, who either were not sufficiently informed of the secret of affairs, or if they were, would not tell every thing they knew through dread of the vengeance of his successor? The manuscript history of *Amelgard* intimates that he was really poisoned; so that one way or the other there is room to vindicate the memory of *Charles* the VIIth, against this charge of weakness: for, should it be true that the fear of being poisoned made some impression on his mind, we are very sensible that it was a hard matter for a man, born with an honest and tender heart, who always did the good that lay in his power, and was always persecuted, not to be discouraged at the ingratitude and treason of attempting his life by the most odious and shocking methods. And much more so, as he was a prince capable of viewing the nothingness of human greatness, by comparing a series of glorious conquests and victories, with the continual privation of the gratitude and friendship of the persons nearest his blood, the only things capable of giving satisfaction to the tenderness of a good heart.

These

These are some reflections which I Letter  
thought it my duty to offer in vindication XI.  
of one of our kings, to whom the mo-  
narchy is most indebted; according to the  
glorious testimony which was given in his  
favour, when *France* was delivered from  
the tyranny of his son, in the midst of the  
assembly of the three estates, held at *Tours*  
in 1483; where, not only the glory of his  
conquests were extolled up to the skies,  
but the justice and wisdom of his admini-  
stration proposed as the most worthy mo-  
del that posterity could follow, and as the  
object of the wishes of all true patriots.



LETTER



## LETTER XII.

*Reign of Charles VII. Assembly of the states at Meun on the Yere in 1426, at Tours in 1433, at Orleans in 1440. Ordinance for the troops in pay, and the fixed establishment of the tailles. Arrêt against the duke of Alençon in 1458.*

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**I**T cannot be denied, that of all the reigns by which our history is rendered illustrious, the events of war have made that of *Charles VII.* one of the most active and brilliant : but as prejudice and partiality, common to most men, have attributed the honour of it to his captains, very little of the glory of his successes falls to his memory in particular ; though at the same time no body disputes his courage and bravery, tried and signalized upon numberless occasions. Little more favourably do people judge of that monarch's political conduct, notwithstanding we are indebted to him for the institution of the first laws that fixed the *police* of the kingdom, rendered the condition of subjects certain, and provided for the subsistence of



of the troops necessary for the common Letter security: an institution as indispensable, XII. after so long a continuation of disorders, as it was really useful in regard to such great effects: so that he would have joined the acknowledgments of all posterity to those of contemporaries, had he taken the necessary measures for preventing that enormous abuse of those very laws after his death, which happened almost as soon as his eyes were closed.

If we give ever so little attention to the consequences of a war of a hundred and twenty years continuance, which had pierced into all the provinces of the kingdom, and during which four or five generations sprung up, altogether as thirsty of the blood and plunder of their countrymen, as the *English* themselves were, we may easily conceive that the least effect that could result from it, was the general forgetfulness of those laws which had flourished under the antient government. Thus we may, in some manner, compare the condition in which *France* found herself after the expulsion of the *English*, to that wherein she was after her delivery from the incursions of the *Normans*; she therefore stood in particular need of a wise king, a king well intentioned, generous and pacifick, that he might unite together the will and the power to do real good to every

*What ' condition France was in at Charles the seventh's accession to the Crown,*

Letter every man. These are the qualities that

XII. precisely met in the person of *Charles VII.*

but he had moreover the friendship of fortune: and it must be owned, that without her protection, that good-will, how rare and precious soever it be in princes, might have been entirely useless to his subjects.

Two sorts of enemies then desolated *France*, as it had happened in the days of *Charles V.* the *English*, looked upon by one party as the aggressors, and by the other as friends, though almost equally burthensome to both; and the *French* troops in the king's service; who, not satisfied to make war against the first, treated the subjects altogether as cruelly as the enemy did; at first through the necessity they were in for subsistence, which they could not draw from their pay by reason of the bad situation of the finances, and afterwards through the custom they had got of plundering. The modern historians seem to charge the generals with those disorders: they complain that *France* had no longer a *Bertrand du Guesclin*, capable of making himself followed and obeyed by the troops, and of leading them to the conquest of some foreign kingdom: but this judgment seems to me to be very unreasonable, since neither the presence, nor even the proximity of the *English*, would permit

permit the stripping *France* of the only troops that could possibly defend her. Besides, we shall see immediately, that from the very moment that *Charles VII.* had secured some little rest for himself from the *English*, by the truce he concluded the 20th of *May*, 1444, he sent the half of his armies into *Alsace* under the conduct of his own son; and that he led the other himself into *Lorain*, where he made a very extraordinary reform, with the wisest precautions that could be taken, though *Normandy* and *Guienne* were still in the possession of the *English*.

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It would rather be much juster to ask why *France* did not at that time defend itself with its own proper forces, as *Philip the August* had done against *Richard* and *John*, kings of *England*, or against the emperor *Otho IV.* in the battle of *Bouvines*: but the custom of the service of the fiefs was so much changed, that it was impossible to ground the defence of the state upon it for the future; though nevertheless it was not altogether so much forgot, as that some sort of utility might not be drawn from it; inasmuch as that the invention of cannon and fire-arms had not quite banished the use of armour, the lance and the bow. The principal cause of the diminution of the feudal service, was the reunion of most part of the great lord-

Why  
France  
did not  
then de-  
fend it-  
self by its  
own pro-  
per forces.



Letter lordships to the crown, which necessarily  
 XII. deprived it of the assistance of the feudaries that formerly possessed them. For though the kings were thereby undoubtedly become richer, yet as they were not so good æconomists, they were less attentive to the good of each lordship in particular, and consequently much more unfit to draw these services from the fiefs, which the particular lords took great care to see performed, that they themselves might afterwards render them to their country and their king, with greater utility and advantage to both: by these means the kings soon found themselves under a necessity of changing the nature of the service, and of taking money in lieu of it to pay their troops. 2. We may reckon the extinction of an infinite number of great families, that either perished by war, or in the \* prisons of *England*, and the alienation of a multitude of lands and fiefs, which the nobility and gentry had been obliged to sell indistinctly, the greatest part of them to rich plebeians, or at least had been wrested from them by forced sales and adjudications by decree, from the time that fiefs had

\* *This is a very severe, but we hope a very unjust reflection on our country: for England has always been remarkable for treating the meanest of her prisoners of war with humanity, the middling sort with politeness, and the greatest with respect.*

been

been rendered mortgageable in préju- Letter  
dice of the essential right of the paramount XII.  
lords. Indeed, the lords did not in the  
original contracts make over the different  
lands granted to their vassals, under any  
other title than that of a conditional en-  
gagement; which could not be looked  
upon as an effectual alienation, since the  
vassal was deprived of that title, by not  
fulfilling the conditions of the infeoffment:  
but we easily see what the degradation of  
the paramount fiefs was at that time,  
when the dexterity of the lawyers had  
persuaded the world that a vassal's lands  
might become engaged for his debts; and  
that, at the tail of that persuasion, they  
had introduced forced sales, which gave  
the lord a new vassal in spite of his teeth.  
It is true, that in some measure to indem-  
nify the paramount lords, they invented  
the practice of lots and sales, and profits  
of the fiefs which they adjudged to belong  
to them upon those occasions: but if the  
lords suffered their mouths to be stopped,  
by the consideration of a temporary gain,  
so little suitable to their honour and inter-  
est; their posterity soon tasted the bitter  
fruits of their avarice, or at least of their  
inattention: and moreover the state in  
general lost its primitive support, because  
the new possessors of the fiefs were men  
born in a condition very foreign to the  
pro-

Letter profession of arms, and consequently were

XII. intirely useless to the end proposed by the  
 establishment of the fiefs. 3. The aug-

mentation of the price of silver, and the different value set upon the coin, had so diminished the produce of the fiefs, that instead of a full subsistence, which they formerly afforded to their possessors, and from which followed the obligation and possibility of service, they were lessened above three fourths of their primitive value. The demonstration of this is easy, by observing that in the decline of the second race, which is that of the infeoffments, for a consideration in money, the pound weight of silver was valued at but seventeen, eighteen, or twenty *sols*; from whence it follows, that lands engaged to any particular person, under the acknowledgment or payment of a *sol per annum*, brought in at least the twentieth part of a pound weight of silver every year to the lord or *foncier* proprietor, and in proportion for higher or lower infeoffments: but when it happened in process of time, that the *sol* became money, without relation to the price silver was at before; and that the mark or half pound of the same metal amounted to fifty *sols*, the infeoffment which obliged the acknowledgment of a *sol* brought in but the hundredth part. And therefore in St. Louis's reign, the value

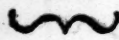


value of pecuniary infeoffments, was even then reduced four fifths ; that is to say, that five *sols* in his time, were worth but one of those of the primitive times ; from whence it follows, that the diminution was incomparably greater in the reign of *Charles VII.* when the mark weight of silver having risen in 1440, to seven *livres* ten *sols*, and consequently the pound weight to fifteen *livres*, fifteen *sols* in his days did but equal the value of one *sol* of the time in which the first infeoffments were made : prodigious diminution of the value of the fiefs ! which ought to give a strange idea of *French* inattention, even in regard to the most sensible interests. For there is no person but what is able to judge how easy it then was to raise the rents, or pecuniary obligations of tenure, in proportion as the value of silver was raised. But if we push this discussion so far as to make an estimate of the present loss, on the footing of the value to which metals have been raised, we shall find that the mark of silver being now mounted to \* thirty-five *livres*, and the pound weight at seventy *livres*, it will follow that the rent or pecuniary obligation of tenure, which ought

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\* It was so when the author writ this letter, but silver is now at forty-eight *livres* the mark, and ninety-six *livres* the pound: gold is in proportion. The author means *avoirdupois* weight.

Letter to be the twentieth part of a pound weight

**XII.** of silver, and was so in the beginning of  
 pecuniary fiefs, is at present but the four-

teen hundredth part of it: a thing that would be very difficult to be credited, did not the least calculation invincibly demonstrate it. You must not then be surprised, if in *Charles* the seventh's time, it was utterly impossible for the fiefs to furnish the service, and if at present the greatest part of them do not even furnish subsistence to the *foncier* proprietors. 4. If to all this we add the many partitions made of those very fiefs, since daughters were admitted to inherit the alienations made in favour of churches and monasteries, the natural decays and wastes, the ruin of buildings, fires, ravages, by the overflowings of rivers, neglect of culture during the war, &c. we may reasonably conclude, that none

By what means the feudal service has been preserved in foreign countries, at the same time that it has been altered or annihilated in France.

but the great fiefs were able to preserve themselves; and that all the small ones, in which consisted the number and strength of the services, were intirely annihilated.

You may, nevertheless, in objection to what I say, bring in the example of foreign countries, where, maugre the rise of the price of silver, maugre all the misfortunes common to mankind, and particularly those of war, with which almost all parts of *Europe* have been almost continually affected these 500 years past;

past; we see the fiefs have preserved them- Letter  
selves without any considerable alteration. XII.

But even this objection leads us to ima-  
gine, that there has been something more  
in *France*, which we cannot hinder our-  
selves from attributing to a formal and de-  
termined design to ruin the fiefs, conceiv-  
ed in the time of *Louis the Gross*, and ex-  
ecuted and followed by all his successors;  
as I have shewn in my former letters, by  
discovering the principal means which  
the ambition and policy of the monarchs,  
assisted by the artifice and cunning of the  
men they employed to bring their designs  
to bear, prompted them to make use of.  
It appears besides, that what saved and kept  
up the fiefs in *Flanders*, in *Italy*, in *Ger-  
many*, in *Spain*, &c. was the constant distinc-  
tion made in those countries between allo-  
dial effects, subject to debts, mortgages,  
and marriage-portions with daughters,  
from the feudal estate, which not having  
been alienated but by engagement, never  
could naturally become subject to any o-  
ther charges or services, but those of the  
infeoffment, without the consent of the *fon-  
cier* proprietor, or lord paramount; if it  
was not however in regard to the yearly in-  
comes of the lands held, which it was no in-  
justice to apply, during the life of him that  
had the profit of them, to the payment  
of his debts, because he might have wasted  
those



Letter those rents in another manner, without the  
XII. participation of his paramount lord. It is  
what is practised in *Spain*, *Flanders*, and  
several parts of *Italy*, particularly in the  
kingdom of *Naples*, with happy success,  
for the support of the noble families; tho'  
we cannot say that the princes have had  
better intentions there than in other places,  
for the preservation of illustrious houses,  
at which their policy might have taken  
some umbrage. Wherefore I think I may  
say, that in *France*, besides the common  
reasons I have mentioned for the degrada-  
tion of the fiefs, we must look for some other  
particular causes, and they immediately  
discover themselves in the character of the  
nobility; who, in granting freedom to  
their slaves, thought they could not be pro-  
perly free themselves, but in having the  
power to alienate their immoveable effects,  
in order to furnish those expences in which  
their want of reflection, and their extrava-  
gance had engaged them. We still re-  
member with what warmth that same no-  
bility opposed the law of gradual and per-  
petual intails and settlements, in the as-  
semblies of the states-general held in the  
years 1560 and 1615, and in what man-  
ner they offered a sort of violence to the  
court, to obtain the reduction of those in-  
tails and settlements to three generations  
only, in all that part of the kingdom  
that

that was governed by customs (*or the common law*); which is a sort of demonstration of the sentiment I attribute to the ancestors of the *noblesse*, when they threw off the yoke of that happy constraint, which obliged them to preserve their fiefs for their children. As to *Germany*, that country admits of an exception quite different from all other nations; because most of the emperors that have reigned there, have had so great an esteem for the feudal order, and been so careful of it, that they have constantly employed all their authority, and their utmost prudence, not only to preserve, but to embellish it.

But to return to the essential subject of this letter; it is very evident, that considering the situation of affairs, the security and tranquility of the state absolutely required the prudence of the monarch to exert itself at that time, in forming a new militia to supply the place of that which was extinct. And moreover, as the people were grown infinitely richer than in former times, especially since they became proprietors of their effects, and trade had brought the greatest part of the money of the nation into their hands, it was not only just, but even necessary, to make them bear the expence of that new soldiery, the *noblesse* having no longer either the power or the means to do it. This is then the

Letter reason that induced *Charles VII.* to form  
 XII. that grand establishment of the *tailles*, to  
 which he subjected only the third estate, that is to say, those who paid it before to their lords, for being particularly defended by them; by this means drawing to himself the common defence of all the members of the state, which was before divided amongst the several lords, and making it his own proper duty; from whence posterity has taken the idea that the king is the only lawful defender of the kingdom, in right of his dignity; and that whoever does not fight under his standard and his orders, fights without right and without justice; the monarch alone having the right of \* *glaiue* in his kingdom. But it follows likewise, that there is nothing so far from the idea of the first institution of the *tailles*, as that of extending them to the *nobleſſe*; who at least ought to be left in the peaceable enjoyment of the domains of their fiefs, when the state possesses itself of their men, to exact a tribute from them, which solely belonged to the *nobleſſe*, according to the antient regulations of the government. Wherefore, tho' the name of *tailles* still subsists in our days, we cannot, considering the immense growth they are arriv'd to, considering the inequality of their distribution, considering the fan-

\* *The sword of justice and defence,*

tastical



tactical rules invented for extending them, and for comprehending the *noblesse* in them; we cannot, I say, sustain that they are still the same tax, no more than we can say that the *gendarmerie* and all the troops now in pay, though formed on the ideas of *Charles VII.* can be deemed the same that he established. Nevertheless, before I enter into the detail of these two articles, very worthy of being cleared up, it is necessary, that I may not fail in our essential matter, to speak of the assemblies of the states-general that were held in this reign, even during the hottest part of the war.

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The first of which mention is made in history, is that of the year 1426, called to meet at *Meun* on the *Yere*, to consider of ways and means for putting an end to the disorders committed by the troops; which receiving but little or nothing of their pay, made infinite ravages all over the country; but less however in the lands under the nomination of the *English*, where people stood upon their defence, than in those under the obedience of the king, which were intirely defenceless. That desolation and the misery of the people were so great, that, according to the author of the book \* *de la Pucelle*, an entire cessation of the culture of the

*Assembly  
of the  
states-  
general  
held at  
Meun,  
and what  
passed in it*

\* *Of the maid of Orleans.*

Letter

XII.



ground, and all country labour, was justly apprehended. The same author ignorantly enough relates what passed in that assembly, in saying that the people very freely inclined to grant the king a general *taille*; provided he would be pleased to communicate to them the dispositions and the means, which he pretended to make use of for stopping the universal disorder of his troops. *Hugh Combarel*, son of *John* lord of *Novailles*, then bishop of *Poitiers*, to which see he had been translated from that of *Beziers*, spoke strongly on the necessity of a good administration; which effectually providing for the payment of the army, would hinder those pillages, that put the people out of a condition to contribute as much as they were willing, and the necessities of the state required. He spoke with the same freedom on the necessity of employing the troops, which were truly useless, as long as they staid on the lands under the obedience of the king. But it was easy to answer that discourse, since it was not the king's fault that those troops were not paid; and moreover it was useless to undertake any enterprizes, without being in a condition to make them succeed; which could not be without still augmenting the number of the troops, tho' they justly complained of those already on foot. These reasons, supported by a majority of  
of

of the deputies, gave room to a conclusion very favourable to the king's intentions; since a resolution was taken to raise a general *taille*, sufficient to answer his wants. The author whom I mentioned, does not explain himself any further; but he adds that the sire of *Giac*, who was then prime minister, an insolent and violent man, dared to say in the king's chamber, in the presence of the lords that attended him thither, in leaving the assembly, that if they would take his advice, they would, by way of example, throw bishop *Combarel*, and all those of his opinion, into the river. An expression which drew upon him the indignation and hatred of all that heard him, and of all to whom it was told. But their resentment did not stop there; for *Giac* was soon after accused of having diverted the money granted by the states to his own private use; upon which the constable *de Richemont* did the same justice to him that he had advised against another, and, without any formality of trial, caused him to be thrown headlong into the river. The registers of the parliament, which at that time was sitting at *Poitiers*, bear witness, that the imposition of the *taille* then granted by the states, was general, and that the officers of that body (*the parliament*) applied to the king in order to be discharged of what was de-



Letter demanded of them ; as being naturally  
 XII. exempt from all *tailles*, impositions, and  
 subsidies granted by the three estates of  
 the kingdom, upon account of their ser-  
 vices. But it is very likely they could ob-  
 tain nothing in the necessity of the then  
 juncture of affairs : nevertheless, this is the  
 first act that proves the possession which  
 the magistrates had of the right of exemp-  
 tion ; and, which every body knows, has  
 since been turned into privilege of nobi-  
 lity.

*Another  
 assembly  
 of the  
 states-ge-  
 neral held  
 at Tours,  
 for put-  
 ting an  
 end to  
 some dis-  
 orders.*

In the year 1433, the states of the king-  
 dom were assembled at *Tours*, by the ex-  
 press command of the king, for pacifying  
 the troubles and confusions of the count  
 that happen'd upon the carrying off the  
 lord of *la Trimouille* ; who being in the  
 castle of *Chinon*, where the king himself  
 happened to be at the same time, was sur-  
 prized one night by the lords of *Beuil*,  
*Varennnes*, *Bresse*, *Chaumont*, *Amboise*, and  
*Cotivi*, afterwards admiral of *France* ; act-  
 ing by the secret instruction of queen *Mary*  
 of *Anjou*, or rather the count of *Maine*  
 her brother, who thereby became mini-  
 ster. *John Chartier*, who mentions that  
 assembly, says no more of it, than that the  
 king order'd the chancellor of *France*,  
 archbishop of *Rheims*, to speak in it, and  
 satisfy the enterprize executed against the  
 lord of *la Trimouille*. Soon after, that is to  
 say

say in the year 1435, the famous treaty of *Arras* was made ; to which, with a great deal of justice, was attributed the welfare and preservation of the monarchy. It was, in effect, the heaviest blow that had been given to the *English* : for, by obliging the duke of *Burgundy* to a neutrality between the two competitors for the crown, it deprived the usurper of an assistance that had been more considerable and useful to him than his own proper forces. But what is singular in that treaty is, its having been the work of a man who had till then, with great reason, been looked upon as the tyrant of *Charles VII.* I mean the constable *Arthur* of *Bretagne*, count of *Richemont*, brother [and uncle of *John V.* *Francis*, and *Peter*, successive dukes of *Bretagne*, after whom he was duke himself at the end of his days. That prince, who had married the dauphiness, princess of *Guienne*, and the duke of *Burgundy's* eldest sister, seem'd to have made that alliance with no other view, than to have a pretext for entering into the quarrel ; as he seem'd to have accepted the dignity of constable merely to traverse the king's authority, and contradict his will and his sentiments. This was then so common an opinion, that the memoirs of the times have remarked, that when the king's forces marched to the relief of *Orleans*, the *Pucelle*

Letter *celle* expected to fight the constable, and the  
 XII. troops that were ranged under his banner:  
 however, it was from that marriage, and  
 the count of *Richemont's* own disposition,  
 that some people knew how to bring about  
 the treaty that saved all *France*.

By whom,  
 and how  
 concerted.

He had an inferior domestick, a *Bre-*  
*ton* by birth, named *Raoul Gruet*, whom the  
 admiral *de Montauban* had given him to  
 be his carver, and who, by the wonder-  
 ful talents he had for negotiating, soon  
 raised himself above the functions of his  
 employment. The first proof of his ge-  
 nius was, in a journey he made into *Flan-*  
*ders* to the duke of *Burgundy*, for obtain-  
 ing the entire liberty of his master, taken  
 prisoner by the *English*, and enlarged upon  
 his parole of honour. That journey soon  
 gave him an opportunity to insinuate him-  
 self into the confidence of the duke; and  
 he managed it with so much prudence and  
 wisdom, that it produced a marriage be-  
 tween his master and the dauphiness prin-  
 cess of *Guienne*, which was a considerable  
 augmentation of honour and fortune to the  
 constable. *Raoul Gruet* took hold after-  
 wards of all the opportunities that offered,  
 to dispose the constable in favour of the  
*French* party; and if he could not save the  
 king the chagrin he suffered at the banish-  
 ment or ruin of his principal creatures,  
 he at least kept his master in the interest  
 of



of the nation in general, until his personal reconciliation with *Charles* the VIIth. But *Gruet's* great master-piece was, without contradiction, the negotiations that produced the treaty of *Arras*; in which, with an infinity of address, he took an advantage of the natural inclination which the duke of *Burgundy* had for his own family, and of his sentiments of glory, generosity, and piety, which he thought might lead him to a reconciliation with the king; and, in fine, of the frequent subjects of discontent which the *English* gave the duke, in spite of themselves, by a consequence of the divisions of their government during the minority of *Henry VI.*

The seeds of that negotiation were sown in the time of King *Charles VII's* coronation in 1429. They began to grow in 1433, and 1434, when the duke was truly determined in a conference he had with the constable, for settling the interests of the house of *Bourbon* in the county of *Clermont*; and, in short, the next year gave them all the maturity necessary for the good of the kingdom. It was in this manner that *Raoul Gruet* consummated the work he had conducted so far with as much courage as prudence. That man, whose conduct and intention deserve the acknowledgment of the latest posterity, was the father and founder of a family which

Letter which became extinct in our days, in the  
 XII. person of the last lord of *la Freté*, who  
 died without children, and under the king's  
 indignation, for having failed in that wisdom and prudence which had founded his house. The new acts of *England* shew us in what manner the *English* were \* prevailed upon to send their ambassadors to *Arras*, in hopes of concluding a general peace; though *France* and *Burgundy* had no such intention: and this the ambassadors discover'd so well, that they immediately withdrew. But as a pretence was only sought for in regard to them, the treaty was not the more lazily pushed on by the parties really interested in it: on the contrary, it was vigorously pursued and concluded. The king, by that treaty, gave on his side, all the satisfaction possible for the death of *John* duke of *Burgundy*, without regard to either the point of honour, or his own personal dignity; and, on the other side, the duke of *Burgundy* sacrificed his resentment to the welfare of the kingdom, by the noblest and most signal example that can be found, among what princes, truly wor-

\* The author should have said bubbled, as the *English* have almost always been from that day to this, in every treaty or negotiation in which the French had any hand or influence.

thy of being so, owe to the publick good. Letter XII.

The negotiators of the treaty were the duke of *Bourbon*; the constable himself; the chancellor *Renaud de Chartres*, archbishop of *Rheims*, one of the best heads of those days; the count of *Vendosme*, high steward of the household; *Christopher d'Harcourt*; the marshal *de la Fayette*; the lords of *Mouy* and *St. Simon*, with ten others of the best houses; *Adam de Cambray*, first president of the parliament, and some other counsellors of the same body: a detail which I have given to shew the fault of some moderns, who, surprized at the rank possessed by *Christopher d'Harcourt* above a marshal of *France*, and by others before a first president of the parliament, have imagined that *d'Harcourt* was an ecclesiastick, and that there was confusion in the rank of the others; for want of knowing that the high *noblesse* was not then so dispossessed of its rank, that it might not attribute to itself, and often obtain precedence, not only of such as are now stiled officers of the crown, but of every sort of magistrature. In fact, *Christopher d'Harcourt* was the cadet, or youngest son of a family: he married *Jane d'Engbien*, heiress of *Aurich*, by whom he had no children, and in 1431, had the post conferred

Observations on the order of sitting, held in the treaty of Arras.



Letter ferred upon him of \* *Grand maitre re-*  
 XII. *formateur general des eaux & forêts de*

France; which he kept during his life. This condition was very different from that of the king's chaplain, upon account of which they are pleased, however, to allow him the rank in question, as looking upon it to be of no consequence: the whole through mere prejudice against the pre-eminence formerly not contested with the high *noblesse*, and now forgot to such a degree, that there is no longer any thing but present and past employments, by which to distinguish any families. I must confess, nevertheless, that this is the last occasion in which that high *noblesse* has been maintained in its precedency; which was formerly natural and essential to it, without the assistance of a particular privilege from the prince; such as was granted in the same reign, to *Francis de Montfort* count of *Laval*, sire of *Gavré*, and his heirs, counts of *Laval*, to precede as well in council as in parliament, in embassies, and in all places, the chancellor of *France*, and all the prelates of the kingdom; who, on their side, still preceded the marshals of *France*, and all the other great officers of the crown, as we see in

\* *We have no post in England of this nature: it is above the chief justices in Eyre.*

the

the session of the states in 1467. The Letter title adds, that the counts of *Armagnac*, *Foix*, and *Vendosme*, had the same right : and that enumeration shews, that as much as the proximity of alliance to the king, may have served as a pretext to these sorts of privileges, there was, in the main, so little regard had, even for the blood of *France*, that the count of *Vendosme* has but the seventh rank in the abovementioned session : *Louis XI.* losing no time, to pretend that no person should have any right or natural dignity, that was not relative either to his toleration, or his good pleasure.

It is certain, that a powerful objection may be made against this pretended rank of the high *noblesse*, drawn from an established truth in my foregoing letters : that is to say, that the honours and the rights, generally went with the fiefs, and consequently to the possession of them, without any consideration for the natural dignity of families ; insomuch that the blood of *France* itself, in the days of *St. Louis*, hardly distinguished the families of *Dreux* and *Courtenay*, so nearly sprung from the royal stem. But I must also assert, that the possession of the great estates gave most of the families the lustre of which they had been stript, and returned it back with so much the more distinction, that

*Observations on the rank then possessed by the high nobility.*

Letter XII. having no names peculiar to them at the time of their deprivation, they re-enter'd into their rights with names of distinction, which from that time forth ought to be incommunicable. It was thus, for example, that the house of *Chatillon* on the *Marne*, perhaps superior in its origin to that of *Champagne*, became inferior to it from the reign of *Hugh Capet* to *Louis the Gross*, in a time when it had no distinctive name, and that it retook afterwards, if not its true rank, one at least upon a sort of equality with the house of *Champagne*, when it arrived to the possession of the great fiefs of *St. Paul*, *Blois*, *Chartres*, *Guise*, *Avesnes*, &c. almost equivalent to that province; and retook that rank too in a manner much more remarkable than its fall, by reason of the distinctive name, which no longer permitted the attributing to a family the honours and rank due to another. Now it follows from this principle, that if the feudal right has really been the occasion of an injustice, in consequence of which certain families have been deprived of the true rank which ought to belong to them, as, in fact, have been the youngest sons of *Dreux* and *Courtenay*, and more antiently the lords of *Ham* and *St. Simon*, issued from the house of *Vermandois*, and from *Bernard* king of *Italy*, it has recovered again an infinity of others,



others, to whom it has procured a permanent distinction by the means of names proper to them, of which the first *French* had no manner of idea. Thus it seems, that the distinction of family names has corrected what was unjust in the right attached to the actual possession of the lands, in perpetuating the memory of the possessions they have had, the honours of which are in some measure transmitted to their posterity by this means: and it is thus that, tho', for example, the house of *Chatillon* no longer possesses the counties of *Chartres* and *Blois*, it derives a part of its glory from their having been so antiently and so long in its hands: an advantage which, we plainly see, ought to be in common to every antient family, render'd illustrious by its alliances and possessions. Wherefore we may safely judge, that the objection drawn from the transport of dignities and honours to the great fiefs, cannot essentially hurt the rank of the high *noblesse*; tho' to speak the truth, it has carried off from it certain honourable functions, which, in most of the provinces of the kingdom, and even in particular dioceses, have always been attached to the possession of certain lands.

It is for this reason that we see in *Languedoc* and *Bretagne*, that the right of baronage, the precedence among the ba-

Letter rons, has remained attached to certain  
 XII. fiefs; and that likewise in *Normandy* the  
 high dignities, before they were suppressed by the edict of *Henry IV.* had the same lot. But that edict, which in some measure re-established order in *Normandy*, gave rise to another inconvenience; that is to say, that after the general suppression of the high dignities, some families had credit enough to get the pretended title of their land re-established and appropriated to their name: having procured their pretensions to be received upon the footing of a legitimate right, extinct through inadvertency, and worthy of a special favour from the prince. From whence has happen'd that those families have got a right attributed to themselves, altogether new and entirely singular, as if it had been antient, incontestable, and universally acknowledged: from which have sprung the new ideas of privileges, ranks, seats in parliament, appropriation of the title of first baron, &c. and what is much worse, the exclusion of those who had at least a right as evident as theirs, but failed to make use of the same pretensions. In fact, there is nothing to be said against acts of authority, by which the king is pleased to raise certain families above others: we ought to know and hold for certain, that in the practice of the present times kings  
 are

are masters, and the dispensers of dignities and honours; and what we might lawfully wish in this respect is, that they were sufficiently informed, to prevent their too lightly conferring such favours. But whatever happens, the true *noblesse* will have wherewithal to comfort themselves for having at present so little share in them, if, on the other hand, they preserve sentiments proportioned to the greatness of their origin; in considering that all the favour of monarchs can communicate nothing more than titles or privileges, and that it cannot make any other \* blood run in the veins but what is natural to them.

Letter  
XH.

In the year 1439, the king having recovered the city of *Paris*, and the greatest part of the kingdom, and being more taken up with the love of peace, and the re-establishment of a legal and reasonable police, than the glory of his conquests, assembled the clergy of his kingdom, and a great council of the lords, in the holy chapel of *Bourges*, to consider of means for healing the divisions which then distracted the church. The ecclesiasticks,

*Assembly of the clergy and the lords, in which the Pragmatic Sanction was established.*

\* *This is a strange way of reasoning in the author: he strongly presumes that there was a distinction of blood, and a difference, or rather several species of mankind in the beginning; the only nobility of which was preserved among the French.*



Letter with great ability, seized that opportunity  
 XII. for establishing their own authority, in  
 drawing up a regulation which put them  
 under cover, for the future, against all  
 the attempts of *Rome*: hoping that the  
 pope would be well enough satisfied with  
*France*, for her not having adhered to his  
 deposition, pronounced by the council of  
*Basil*. It was in execution of this power  
 that they formed a general law, under  
 the name of the *Pragmatic Sanction*;  
 which being confirmed by letters patents  
 from *Charles VII.* was published and en-  
 registered in parliament the 13th of *July*  
 in the same year. It is agreed to this very  
 day, that since the establishment of the  
 monarchy, there had not been any rule  
 so wisely and solidly contrived as it is for  
 ecclesiastical affairs; so that we may look  
 upon it as the chief testimony of the just and  
 perfect intention, and the great capacity  
 of the monarch, or the ministers he em-  
 ployed.

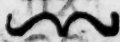
*A great  
 encomium  
 on the  
 clergy,  
 and also  
 on the  
 king and  
 his mini-  
 sters.*

*Another  
 assembly  
 of the  
 states-ge-  
 neral for  
 consulting  
 of ways  
 and means  
 to procure  
 a general  
 peace.*

The next year, full of the same desire,  
 in favour of the police of his kingdom, he  
 called an assembly of the states-general in  
 the city of *Orleans*: the king was the first  
 that came; after him came the old queen of  
*Sicily*, mother of the queen regnant; then  
 the duke of *Bourbon*, the count of *Maine*,  
 the constable *de Richemont*, *Peter de Bre-*  
*tagne* his nephew; the count of *la Marche*,

governor to the dauphin ; *Bernard d'Armagnac* count of *Pardiac* of *la Marche*, (husband of *Eleonora* of *Bourbon*, heiress of *la Marche*) and the count of *Vendosme*, who, tho' of the name of *Bourbon*, is mentioned but after him ; the ambassadors and procurators of the duke of *Orleans*, still a prisoner in *England* ; that is to say, the count of *Dunois* his natural brother, and the bishop of *Orleans*, who are named together, but the bishop last ; then the archbishop of *Rheims*, chancellor ; the ambassadors and procurators of the duke of *Burgundy*, namely, the bishop of *Tournay*, the sire of *Crequy*, *Simon de la Lang*, bailiff of *Amiens*, and the sire d'*Auchin* ; the ambassadors and procurators of the duke of *Bretagne*, that is to say, the bishops of *Nantes* and *St. Briex*, and the sire of *Laval* ; the ambassador and procurator of the count of *Armagnac*, called the sire d'*Estans*, or *Estaing*, or *Estange* ; the bishop of *Beauvais*, and the other deputies of *Paris* and the isle of *France* ; and in general, the deputies of the three orders, and all the other bailiwicks and countries of the kingdom, in crowds. The assembly being formed in a particular part of the city, which is not mentioned by the historian *Berry*, who has given a detail of those states, was sent for to the king's palace, where the princes had remained ;

Letter  
XII.



Letter and having been introduced into a great  
 XII. hall prepared for the session, the king entered and took his place: the princes staid near his person, which is here observed to be the first time, and seems to be the foundation of the distinguished rank which from that time forth they have attributed to themselves. Each member afterwards took the place that was marked for him: after which the chancellor *Renaud de Chartres* made a speech in the king's name, and set forth his intention to procure the peace and repose, of which *France* stood so much in need. He reported, that to arrive at these points, a conference had been held at *St. Omer*, in which the count of *Vendosme*, the archbishop of *Narbonne*, and he, the chancellor, had been deputies; and that they had made a report of certain propositions of it, upon which the king would have their particular opinion of each of the articles; and to that end he caused copies of them to be immediately deliver'd to all the deputies, desiring them, in the king's name, to give in a speedy answer.

Nevertheless the particular deliberations took up eight days, after which the king publickly heard the opinion of every man that had a right to speak; which gave occasion to a great many harangues, celebrating the praise of peace even to envy,  
 and



and without forgetting to stuff them, according to the eloquence of those days, with the tiresome sayings of philosophers, antient historians, and examples that ought to be followed. But whether it was that the resolution was drowned in the vast number of words, or whether the diversity of opinions was too great, the king thought it necessary to chuse a certain number of deputies, who should examine the matter more maturely, and make a publick report of it. The deputies were the count of *Vendosme*, *James Juvenal*, afterwards bishop of *Poitiers*, the count of *Dunois*, the marshal *de la Fayette*, *John Raboteau*, president of the parliament, and some members of the same tribunal. The opinions of that committee were different. *James Juvenal* spoke for those that sustained the necessity of peace; and the president *Raboteau* shewed the impossibility of making one; the vanity of hoping for it, as long as the *English* had a foot of ground in the kingdom; and, in short, the necessity of making an effort for driving them entirely out of it. Nevertheless, after a full hearing of the matter in debate, the almost general conclusion was for peace; and, in conformity to that resolution, it was ordered, that the former ambassadors or plenipotentiaries should return to *St. Omer*, to conclude it on the most

Letter most favourable conditions they could, in  
 XII. case it was possible to bring the *English* to  
 ~~~~~ listen to it. However, they did not suc-  
 ceed in this design until a long time af-
 ter; and all that could be had was a truce
 of some months. This example shews
 that the common deliberations generally
 tend to the lessening the present evil, and
 are seldom determined by the considera-
 tion of a future convenience or utility.

*Means
 made use
 of by
 Charles
 VII. for
 putting an
 end to the
 disorders
 which his
 troops
 commit-
 ted in the
 kingdom.*

But, on the other side, the states had a
 much more important effect: for the king,
 touched with the extreme misery and de-
 solation of the people, which were repre-
 sented to him, and which he evidently
 knew proceeded more from the bad disci-
 pline of his own troops, than from the
English, he there took the wise resolution
 to put a stop to their disorders by all pos-
 sible means. He acquainted the deputies
 with the design he had formed to reduce
 them all into distinct bands, or separate
 troops and companies, under captains of
 his own chusing; to make them march
 out of those provinces which the *English*
 could not hurt; to post them on the fron-
 tiers; and to give them certain pay, which
 might be half sufficient for their subsist-
 ence; to the end, that should they commit
 any disorders, they might fall on none but
 the enemy; the whole thro' the hopes he
 had of regulating them afterwards defini-
 tively

tively, both as to number and pay, under an exact discipline; which for the future might put his good subjects in a state of security. For the execution of his project he demanded a *taille*, which was most liberally granted; as well because they were persuaded of his good management, and the fidelity of his promises, as because they plainly saw that the evil proceeded from his want of means. *John Chartier*, a cotemporary author, has explained this business to us but by halves; and the herald *Berry*, full as bad a historian as the other, does not say much more of it. We may nevertheless gather from what they say of the matter, that as soon as the assembly was dismissed, the king began his march to make the troops quit those quarters where they were no longer necessary, and advance to the frontiers. He found some resistance in certain places; but his firmness in depriving the plunderers of all employment in the army, and severely punishing the rebellious, the seditious, and such as he found accused of enormous crimes, reduced them at last to acknowledge the justice of his orders, and obey them. In *Bar-sur-Aube*, he was obliged to cause a natural son of the duke of *Bourbon* to be drowned; his avarice and inhumanity having almost destroyed not only the town, but all the neighbourhood:

but

Letter but the idea of that severity, which the
XII. male-contents immediately called ingrati-
tude, and want of acknowledgment of
services, joined to the other interests of
the leaders, was not slow in producing
great commotions among the principal
lords of the court, which began to break
out the same year. However, to keep his
word with the states, it was not sufficient
to have clear'd the provinces of so many
plunderers; he must reduce the troops to
a form and discipline of such a nature,
that they might flatter themselves that the
past disorders would never take new footing
again, and expect the projected amend-
ment to advance every day. It was with
such a design that the king ordered, that
instead of ten or a dozen baggage-horses,
which each man at arms commonly had
along with him, the number should be
reduced to three horses and two archers
for each, and the rest of the equipages dri-
ven away, as not only useless but even dan-
gerous, under pain of corporal punishment.
That ordinance was happily and punctu-
ally executed among the troops, who on-
ly grew prouder of it, and more willing
and ready to serve. As to the rest, as that
regulation was not the work of a single day,
the king was obliged to go through with
it peace-meal, as opportunities and con-
junctures gave him room to display his
in-

intentions for the advantage of his subjects. Letter
But, nevertheless, we may say that he did **XII.**
enough in the course of that year to per-
suade the people of the honesty of his de-
signs, and his integrity in the performance
of the engagements he had entered into
with them in the assembly of the states;
which more and more gained him the
minds and the hearts of all honest men.

However, the chiefs of the troops were
far from his sentiments; most of them
pretended, that their authority and their
profit were equally going to be retrenched
by that new regulation: they said loudly,
that such was not the recompence due to
their services; and that the flexibility of
the monarch was so great, that if the go-
vernment of the state was left any longer
in his hands, his imprudence and weakness
would lose all the advantages that had
been until then gained, at the expence of
so much blood spilled, and so much money
drawn from the commons of the kingdom.

The duke of *Alençon*, the most seditious
and the most turbulent of all the lords of
the age, was godfather to the dauphin,
who was at that time seventeen years of
age, but already married to the princess
of *Scotland*, and known to be of a dark
malicious genius, and sovereignly ambi-
tious of authority: the king, his father,
who had a great mistrust of his character
and king.

*The chiefs
of the
troops re-
volt.*

*The duke
of Alen-
çon de-
bauches
the dau-
phin, and
brings
him into
the party
of the
cabal a-
gainst the
king.*

Letter and humour, kept him at a distance from

XII. court, under the conduct of *Bernard d'Ar-*

magnac, count of *la Marche* and *Pardiac*, one of the wisest and valiantest lords of those times; but who, for no other reason, was become so odious and insupportable to his pupil, that his vengeance against him, and hatred to all his house, was not extinguished even by the blood of his son, *James de Nemours*, whom he caused near forty years after to be executed as an infamous malefactor, in the *Place de Greve* (the common place of execution of malefactors in Paris). The duke of *Alençon* made use of that disposition to debauch the dauphin from his obedience to the king his father, by persuading him that it was very easy for him to make himself king from that time forth.

And several lords.

To inspire him with these projects, he made use of *Peter d'Amboise*, lord of *Chaumont*, *John Sangher*, and young *Boucicaut*. But while he was labouring on that side, he neglected nothing on the other, to draw the other lords of the blood into his designs, and likewise the old captains who had been so long in the king's service. His intrigue succeeded as to the duke of *Bourbon*, the counts of *Vendosme* and *Dunois*, the lord of *la Trimouille*, the bastard of *Bourbon*, afterwards admiral, and the lord of *Chabannes*. They all at once broke the king's ordinance, abandoning the

the frontiers, and leading their troops back into the open country: the duke of *Alençon* marched as far as *Niort*, where making himself master of the dauphin's person, after having driven away the count of *la Marche* in a scandalous manner, he thought himself strong enough to make attempts on the neighbouring places. Letter XII.

The king, on his side, immediately had recourse to negociation for disuniting that cabal, to which he deputed the constable and the *fire of Gaucourt Culant*, who was then with him; but on the refusal of the conspirators to enter into treaty, he was resolved to try fortune himself. He made all possible haste to *Poitiers*, where while he was gathering up troops, he was informed that the duke of *Alençon* had surprised the town of *St. Maixant*, but that the castle and the abby still held out for him. Upon this advice, he flew to their assistance, and relieved them with so much bravery and success, that the frightened dauphin did think himself safe, until he got into the *Bourbonnois*, to which he fled with the greatest speed he could make: but the king pursued him with almost as much expedition; and history observes, that the order which he had lately established among the soldiery, was found to be so good in this first experiment of it, that in a very few days he found himself at the head

Advantages which the king gains over the rebels.

Letter head of 800 * lances, and 2000 bow-
 XII. men or archers, without leaving the fron-
 tiers unfurnished; because he had, with
 extreme diligence and care, filled up the
 places of all such as had failed in their duty.
 The dauphin thought he should be able to
 defend himself at * *Moulins*, with the forces
 which the duke of *Bourbon* had assembled
 there; but the king's approach obliged him
 to retreat to *Decize*: and he had thoughts
 of throwing himself into *Burgundy*, un-
 til he was informed that all the cities and
 towns looking with indignation on his
 bad conduct, were preparing to shut their
 gates against him. That news constrain-
 ed him to try an effort on the side of *Au-*
vergne; but there he was likewise almost
 as ill-received. The king being entered
 into *Clermont*, convoked the states of the
 province to meet there, in order to let
 them know the true disposition of affairs,
 the injustice and evil conduct of his son,
 and the disloyalty of the lords who had
 seduced him to take up arms against a fa-
 ther and a king, who in labouring for the
 publick good of the kingdom, laboured in
 reality for him, who was the heir appa-
 rent of it. The bishop of the place was
 the man that spoke, and so forcibly set

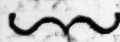
* *Spear-men, or knights in compleat armour.*

† *Capital of the Bourbonnois.*

forth the justice of the king's reasons and Letter
 his right, that the whole assembly zealous- XII.
 ly determined to make him an offer of 
 their lives and fortunes for enabling him
 to subdue the rebels. Affairs being in *Which*
 this situation, the count of *Eu*, the eldest *oblige*
 of the house of *Artois*, undertook to bring *them to*
 the leagued princes to repent of what they *submit.*
 had done: to which end he made several
 journies to them, with this effect, that the
 dauphin and the duke of *Bourbon* resolved
 to come and ask pardon of the king, and
 submit themselves to his clemency. But
 tho' the treaty and the negotiations were
 carried on in form, yet they neglected go-
 ing to the king on the day appointed; up-
 on which he immediately entered the
Bourbonnois, and in a very few days took
 so many places in it, that at last the princes
 resolved on a submission. The duke of *A-*
lençon made his treaty apart; the dauphin
 and the duke of *Bourbon* saw the king at
Cusset, and surrendered up to him the
 places that still held out for them. But
 it was even then observed, that the dau-
 phin only gave way to necessity, and that
 his heart, far from the sentiments of filial
 duty, was ever afterwards implacable to
 his father: that sort of civil war, which
 got the name of *la praguerie*, was so sud-
 denly put an end to by the resolution and
 vigilance of the monarch, that it did very

Letter

XII.



little prejudice to the war he was carrying on against the *English*, which at that time was very hot about *Paris*, by the continual taking and retaking of castles and fortified places. But the king soon after carried it also into *Guienne*; where the taking of several towns, and the reconciliation and submission of several lords, heightened the reputation of his arms.

*The king
assembles
the states
of Lan-
guedoc.*

Nevertheless, as the prosperity of arms never made him forget the care of peace and order, he assembled the states of *Languedoc* at *Toulouse* in 1442. There he was less taken up in making new regulations, than providing for the observance and support of those already made; according to this general

*A glorious
maxim of
Charles
VII. wor-
thy the
imitation
of some
princes in
these days.*

maxim he had laid down to himself, *Never to introduce any novelty without an evident necessity, and never to suffer the people to be made uneasy, under specious pretext for the reformation of abuses, which are too often proposed to princes, more for the private interest of the proposers, than the general benefit of the publick.* He took cognizance at that time of the quarrel between the countess of *Cominge* and her husband, and enlarged her from a prison, in which she had been kept several years, though she was then above eighty years old. It was also then that began the quarrels of the house of *Armagnac*, which brought it to its total ruin in the following reign: the king

king not being pleased to suffer the chief Letter
of that great name, to stile himself *count by* XII.
the grace of God; that such a novelty
might not give room to the independancy
which the count affected. And this is a
most remarkable example of the retribution
which providence observes in the order
and disposition of events; for that very
house of *Armagnac*, which perished in the
most terrible and disastrous manner ima-
ginable, as soon as the *French* became
masters of *Guienne*, was the most ac-
tive of all the province to drive out the
English, its antient and legitimate masters
ever-since the reign of *Charles V.* In May
1444, the king concluded a truce with
the *English*, which was afterwards cement-
ed by the marriage of the king of *England*
with *Margaret of Anjou*, daughter of king
René of Sicily, and niece to the queen reg-
nant of *France*. In fine, seeing he had
secured a little rest for some time, he ap-
plied himself heartily to the making a re-
form in the state, and fixing the discipline
of the troops. To that end, having con-
sidered the humour of the captains, whose
greediness of gain he very rightly judged
could not be satisfied, if some new op-
portunities of plunder were not proposed
to them, he thought it absolutely necessa-
ry to amuse them with the hopes of a
war in *Germany*, in which they might
P 2 expect

Makes a
truce with
the Eng-
lish.

Letter expect more certain and greater spoils, in
 XH. as much as that part of *Europe* had been in

peace during all the troubles of *France*:
 and to give still a greater reputation to that
 undertaking, he would have the dauphin,
 his only son, commander in chief of it.
 The pretext was to assist the house of
Austria to recover the sovereignty of
Switzerland; to punish the count of *Mont-*
beliard, for some usurpations he had made
 on the crown lands; and, in fine, more
 effectually to incline the council of *Basil* to
 come to an accommodation with the pope.
 That resolution being taken, nothing was
 talked of every where but the advantages
 which the troops might expect to find in
 that expedition: and the dauphin went
 to *Troyes* with a most sumptuous reti-
 nue and equipage, in order to put him-
 self at the head of the army. He march-
 ed immediately afterwards against *Mont-*
beliard, which made no resistance; and
 from thence he drew near to *Basil*, whi-
 ther the people of the city had called the
Swiss to their assistance; who, though they
 had drawn but 4000 foot together, had,
 nevertheless, the courage to give battle to
 the dauphin: but history takes notice at
 the same time to their glory, and as an
 example of firmness that was wanting in
 the character of the antient *Romans* them-
 selves, that they all perished there, except,

*Sends his
 troops a-
 gainst
 Montbe-
 liard
 under the
 dauphin's
 conduct.*

BRITANNICVM

MUSEVM

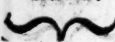
FR

*Remark-
 able va-
 lour of the
 Swiss,
 and their
 severity.*

as some say, one single man, or according Letter to others, sixteen; but all histories agree, XII. that those that escaped the battle were shot as deserters, by the sentence of a court martial. The *French*, on their side, lost above 10,000 men; which obliged the dauphin to fall down into *Alsace*, where there was less danger and more hopes of plunder: and with that view he quartered his army in it. In the mean time, The king the king in person laid siege to *Metz*, *besieges Metz.* with a shew of revenging the king of *Sicily*, his brother-in-law, for the assistance which that city had given against him to the count *de Vaudemont*, his competitor for the dutchy of *Lorain*; but in effect to draw money from it for the execution of his designs. The king's inclinations coming to the knowledge of the inhabitants, they did not hesitate in the least to redeem their liberty and their repose, at the expence of their treasure: a treaty was immediately brought on the carpet, by which they acquitted king *Réné* of 10,000 gold florins, which he had borrowed from them in his wants, and gave 80,000 more to king *Charles VII.*

That prince marched afterwards to *Nancy* in *Lorain*, which then belonged to the king of *Sicily*, and there kept the greatest and most magnificent court that he had ever assembled since his accession to the throne. The king disbands almost all his troops.

Letter throne. The dauphin likewise marched

XII. his army thither by the king's orders,
 which, as well as the king's, was paid ac-

cording to the muster-rolls, and at that instant both one and the other were disbanded, except 1500 lances, and 4500 archers, all chosen from amongst the bravest and best behaved men of both armies: they were divided into fifteen troops of an hundred men at arms in each, under the command of as many captains, chosen out of the most illustrious of the nobility, and known by frequent proofs of their courage and probity. The king issued two pro-

*Prevents
the disorder
they might
commit in
returning
to their
respective
habitations,
and
grants a
general
amnesty.*

clamations at the same time; the first of which contained an order for all those that were disbanded to return each to his proper habitation, without noise or disorder, upon pain of being hanged; and against all vagabonds and strolers that should attempt to commit the least disorder in the towns or open country: the second was a general amnesty for all past crimes and disorders, forbidding all judges and officers to make enquiry after, or disturb any person whatever for any crime or offence committed during the war; depriving them, for that purpose, of all right of taking information, or of ordering, decreeing, or determining, any thing concerning them. In this manner did that wise monarch, having found the means

to

to draw the troops out of the kingdom all at once, hinder any of them from re-
entering it armed, except such whose fidelity and behaviour he thought himself sure of : obliging the rest to disband, and quietly retire each to the place where he might expect to find subsistence.

Letter
XII.

But as the first order was not sufficient, if the king had not at the same time provided for the pay of the new *gendarms* and franc-archers (as they were then called) as well as for the regulation of their equipage and their armour, offensive and defensive ; he gave out another declaration, by which the pay of the *gendarm* was fixed at thirty *livres* a month, for himself, three horses, his page, who was properly an apprentice in arms, a lusty servant, two archers, and a * *coustelier* also on horseback, which amounted to six horses for each man at arms. It was even found some time afterwards, that the pay of the franc-archers ought to be paid to them directly, to avoid the abuse that might easily happen, through the inattention or bad management of the man at arms, who had naturally occupation enough with the care and entertainment of six horses ; and therefore those archers were allowed four *livres* a month each, as

*Regulates
the pay of
the gen-
darms
and arch-
ers.*

* *Perhaps to keep his armour and arms in order.*

Letter we see by the ordinance of 1448, of
 XII. which I shall speak this moment. Now

~~~~~ it follows from the establishment of the  
 pay of each man at arms, that the whole  
*gendarmerie* cost the state 540,000 *livres*  
 a year, or 67,500 marks of silver, at  
 eight *livres* the mark, which was then the  
 current value. If to this we add the parti-  
 cular pay of the officers, which then did  
 not exceed 1200 *livres* a year for a cap-  
 tain, 800 for the lieutenant, and 600 for  
 the *guidon*, it is evident that the total of that  
 annual expence may be valued at near  
 200,000 crowns: but if we likewise join to  
 it the pay of 4,500 archers, at a mark of  
 silver a month for each two of them, it will  
 make an augmentation of 26,000 or 27,000  
 marks of silver a year; which in those days  
 made an exorbitant sum, (816,000 *livres*)  
 and almost incredible, if we compare it  
 with what *France* offered her king 120  
 years before, at the beginning of the war  
 with the *English*, in a time when she had  
 not yet felt the least part of those evils for  
 which she was reserved.

How  
 much  
 those  
 troops cost  
 a year.

The king  
 lays a tax  
 for their  
 mainte-  
 nance.

To form that sum, which seemed im-  
 mense in the proposition, the king, by his  
 own authority, but in consequence of the  
 consent of the states-general assembled  
 in 1440, laid a general land-tax, and  
 also a general tax on people's indus-  
 try, which was called the *taille* of the  
*gendar-*

gendarmerie; and which, though he afterwards augmented it by near one half, never exceeded 1,200,000 *livres*, or 150,000 marks (weight) of silver, during all the course of his reign; a sum, indeed, far exceeding all that could have been imagined in the time of *Philip the Fair*, or the other covetous princes whose history I have related; but which gives a convincing testimony of the great increase of the metallick riches of *France* by trade, in the midst of the disorders of a bloody war, tho' long before the *Indies* were discover'd.

Letter  
XII.

I say that *Charles VII.* was obliged to augment the *tailles* by near one half, because in fact he was forced to double his gendarmerie, when the truce with the *English* having been violated, he found himself under a necessity to carry on the war with greater vigour than he had done before. *James Cœur*, whom the trade to the east, and particularly *Egypt*, had rendered one of the richest subjects in the world, and who was properly the minister of that prince's finances, had been a long time urging him to undertake the conquest of *Normandy*, and promised to furnish him with what sums he wanted for augmenting his troops: but the prince, ever wise and cautious, did not give himself up to promises which might be looked upon as rash or indiscreet, and chose rather to secure

Aug-  
ments his  
gendar-  
merie and  
the taxes.

Letter cure his resource in the revenues of his state.

XII. This made him in the year 1448, being then at *Moutils les Tours*, issue out a new declaration concerning the free archers, who were to accompany the *gendarmery* according to the first regulation.

*Extract  
of an or-  
dinance  
relating  
to the free  
archers.*

This ordinance, the effects of which almost intirely changed the face of the kingdom, as I shall relate presently, contains seven articles.

By the 1st, the king's *will* is, that in every parish of the kingdom, there be a free archer, obliged to hold himself in readiness for service, armed and mounted, as is explained in the ordinance: that he shall be bound to exercise daily in arms, that he may be fit to go to war upon the first notice given.

By the 2d, he orders that the archers shall be chosen by the elect of every election, from among the ablest and most expert of each place, without partiality or exception, and with the sole view of the good of the service.

By the 3d, he will have them to be pay'd for the time of their actual service, and no longer, at the rate of four *livres* per month.

By the 4th, he declares them free and exempt from all taxes, impositions, and in general of all charges laid, or to be laid on the people, by the king's authority; except



except the aids, and the *gabelle* upon salt in the countries where it takes place.

Letter  
XII.

By the 5th, he *wills* that letters of in-franchisement be delivered to them by the elected, which shall be of the same validity with the letters from the chancery.

By the 6th he orders that they shall take an oath, between the hands of the elected of their respective cantons, to serve the king well and faithfully in their military accoutrements, and clothing suitable to their condition, and not to serve any other in the said accoutrements and clothing, without his express commands.

In fine, the 7th article orders their name, surname, and place of abode to be registered in all the seats of elections in the kingdom.

These were the famous regulations concerning the *gendarmery*, the general *taille*, and the free archers; which, though so good in themselves, and so suitable to the time they were made in, that we may say that the recovery of the kingdom, and consequently the preservation of the state, seems to be owing to them, may nevertheless be looked upon as the principal cause of the corruption of the whole *French* government; not only because they were given without any precaution against the abuses which they might produce, either by favouring despotism and arbitrary authority,

*Abuses which were afterwards introduced by those regulations.*

Letter thority, or giving the fortunes of every  
 XII. subject to the discretion of the kings, or  
 ~~~~~ the caprice of their ministers; but particularly because they served to confound, almost without resource, all the orders of the kingdom. In fact, the ordinance of the free archers, by exempting them from the *taille*, has so confounded them with the most antient *nobleſſe*, who have no other privilege remaining, that we can hardly distinguish their origin at present, without an application and labour which do not suit with the capacity of every man, considering all the artful methods made use of since that time, for taking out of the offices of the elections, the monuments which ought to have been preserved there, of the names, surnames, families, and places of origin of all those, who, during the hundred years following, were admitted into this new militia of free archers. This is likewise the reason which at present makes the *connoisseurs* so suspicious of all nobility, whose origin can't be indisputably traced beyond the year 1445, either by records or history; though it was not till three years after, that the chancery was stripped of the right of enregistering the new nobles, in order to invest the elected of the provinces with the power of freeing from imposts, and certifying their *infranchisements*; privileges equal to that  
 of

of ennobling, which having been carried Letter
to excess in a few years, made *Louis XI. XII.*
successor to *Charles VII.* think that it
would be altogether as well to grant the
title of nobility to all the possessors of fiefs,
for a moderate tax, which became noted
by the name of the *inquiry into the free*
fiefs, of the years 1469 and 1470. We
ought, nevertheless, to acknowledge, for
the honour of the prince's memory, whose
conduct I am relating, that in his time,
when simplicity and honesty were not yet
intirely corrupted, it was impossible to
foresee the abuses which were introduced
under favour of those ordinances, or pre-
sume, for example, that a personal ex-
emption granted for actual service, noto-
rious to a whole province, could become a
title of nobility, and perpetuate itself in a
long posterity. In this reign, *Stephen de*
Vignole, alias *la Hire*, and *Poton de Xain-*
trailles, private *Gascoign* adventurers, were
seen in the number of those illustrious
captains, who rescued *France* from the
English yoke, without being reproached
with setting up for what they were not,
or attributing to themselves a noble origin
that did not belong to them. The grand
master, *Anthony de Chabanes*, had been
brought up a page to the former, without
degrading himself; because, in those days
they

Letter they fought rather to learn the art of war
 XII. in a good * school, than boast of their
 birth and dignity, without either merit or
 courage. Therefore, we may say, it would
 be unjust to load the memory of *Charles*
VII. with the iniquity of the following
 ages: tho' that iniquity made a handle
 of his ordinances to establish itself, and
 throw dust in the eyes of posterity. As
 to the rest, I might mention several fa-
 milies, very considerable at present, whose
 origin cannot be traced further than the
 date we are speaking of; but this is more
 properly the business of genealogists and
 heralds, who often labour very usefully
 on these matters, tho' we have likewise as
 often occasion to complain of their conceal-
 ing great truths.

*The king
 regulates
 the coin.*

The police of the kingdom, the con-
 dition and number of the troops, as well
 as their pay, the crown revenues, and the
 king's authority, were then quite altered
 during the interval of the truce with the
English, that is to say, from the month
 of *April*, 1444, to the peace of *Fougeres* at
 the end of the year 1448. But as *Charles*
VII. was not a prince who thought that
 his authority ought to be employed only
 to swallow up the wealth of his subjects,
 by imposing arbitrary taxes, without in-

* *A very proper lesson for several young gentlemen in
 England.*

dem-

demnifying them some other way, he Letter
 applied himself to regulating the coin, in XII.
 such a manner, that excepting the signo-
 rial right and expence of coinage, he took
 no profit out of it ; giving it moreover, a
 currency proportioned to the true value of
 the metal in its purity, as acknowledged
 by all nations of *Europe*, and not arbitrarily
 determining it in his closet, without re-
 gard to foreign trade. It was by these so-
 lid establishments that he prepared him-
 self, during the four years truce he enjoy-
 ed in the middle of his reign, for the new
 war, which the necessity of defending him-
 self against the enemy's continual infideli-
 ties, rather than his own private ambition,
 forced him to undertake. The war be-
 gan with attacking several places in Nor-
 mandy, which scarce made any resistance
 against the valour of the *French* troops ;
 so that towards the end of the year 1449,
 the king was master of *Rouen*, and al-
 most all the province. But fortune made
 him pay dear for those advantages by the
 grief he felt at the loss of the beautiful
Agnes, who died of a dose of poison, which
 was believed to have been given her by the
 dauphin's orders. That prince, who had al-
 ready carried his passion so far as to give
 her a blow on the face, thought that he
 ought not to let her survive that affront,
 lest she should revenge it one day or an-
 other.

The war
 with
 England
 is renew-
 ed.

Death of
 Agnes
 Sorel.

Letter other. The king lost in her almost all his
 XII. satisfaction, and during the rest of his life
 appeared sensible of nothing, but the disturbance he might receive from the powerful correspondencies which his son preserved at court, notwithstanding the great distance he was from it. That prince had retired into *Dauphiné* in the beginning of the year 1449, and remained there until 1456, when he went to *Brabant*, out of the king's dominions, after having married *Charlotte* daughter to the duke of *Savoy*, without his father's consent. Nevertheless, the conquest of *Normandy* was completed with the same success that it began, and *Cherbourg*, the last town of that province, where the *English* defended themselves, capitulated the 12th of *August*, 1450. From thence the king fell like a torrent into *Guienne*, and the same fortune accompanying him thither, the whole province was brought under his subjection in the course of the year 1451. But the *English* having re-entered *Bordeaux* the next year, by means of an understanding they preserved with the lord of *Lesparé*, and several others, it required a new expedition to reduce it, which ended by the famous battle of *Castillon* in *Perigord*, wherein the lord *Talbot*, captain-general of the *English* forces, lost his life, after having made war against *France* for the space

Conquest
of Nor-
mandy.

Battle of
Castillon.

space of forty years. This battle was fought the 17th of July 1453. Letter XII.

In this very year *Charles VII.* tarnished his glory by his ingratitude to *James Cœur*, who had served him so well. *Anthony de Chabannes* blackened him to the king, by accusing him of holding a correspondence with the dauphin, and supplying him with money. Suspicions were also raised against him of having been concerned in the death of *Agnes Sorel*; and the lady of *Mortagne* charged him with it. But notwithstanding all the informations they employed, his judges were obliged to declare him innocent of that accusation: however they condemned him, upon other articles, to forfeiture of estate and banishment. This was the occasion of new good fortune for him, which he enjoyed until he died, but never would come back to *France*; so highly did he resent the ingratitude he had met with here. We have in this event a proof that the king's mind was so violently soured at the loss of his mistress, that the bare suspicion of having been the cause of her death did not permit him to remember the most signal services: but, on the other hand, it forms a terrible prejudice against the gratitude and justice of the best princes. The remainder of our monarch's life passed away in bitterness and uneasiness, which

Letter his temper, naturally inclined to melancholy, brought upon him, being worn out and weakened besides, by the continual vexations and contradictions he had to struggle with.

The duke
of Alen-
çon put
under ar-
rest.

He had notice in 1455, of the correspondence with the duke of *Alençon* kept up in *England*, in order to bring the antient enemies of the crown once more into the kingdom, and put them in possession of his fortresses. Moreover, irritated at the intelligence he preserved with the dauphin, who was first seduced from his father's obedience by him, he resolved to make him an example; for which purpose having caused that duke to be arrested in the beginning of the year 1456, he detained him prisoner in the castle of *Chantelles* in *Bourbonnois*, a severe and distant person, until the year 1458, when he brought him to *Vendosme*, in order to see him tried in an assembly of the peers of *France*. This trial was not undertaken without great precaution; the king, a scrupulous observer of rules, would first consult the parliament, sitting at *Paris*, in order to have their opinion concerning the forms necessary to be observed; and we have still in our hands the answer which they made him, in an act passed the 20th of *April* 1458, after *Easter*, containing seven articles.

“ By

“ By the first article, upon the king's Letter
 “ demand, *before what judges ought the* XII.
 “ *personal causes of the peers of France to*
 “ *be tried, and whether by the institution* *Questions*
 “ *of the parliament there be any reserva-* *put to the*
 “ *tions of causes of peers?* they answer, *parlia-*
 “ that by the past examples of the trials *ment con-*
 “ of Robert de Artois, John de Montford, *cerning*
 “ and the king of Navarre, it appears that *forms to*
 “ the king himself was their judge, in a *be obser-*
 “ session of the other peers convoked for *ved in*
 “ that purpose, with some of the lords *the trial*
 “ of the parliament, and other notables of *of that*
 “ his kingdom, and of his privy council; *duke.*
 “ and that they do not find, either by the
 “ institution of the parliament, or any o-
 “ ther posterior ordinance, that any refer-
 “ vation was made in the causes of peers”.
 Upon which I can't forbear saying, that
 the parliament seemed then to have for-
 got the bed of justice held in the year 1387,
 and the famous protest of the peers of
 France, of which the act was there deli-
 vered to them.

“ By the 2d, on the question, *whether*
 “ *the lords of the blood, not peers, have the*
 “ *same privilege as the peers?* the court an-
 “ swers, that it cannot give advice in that
 “ point, because there is actually a law-
 “ suit depending about it, wherefore they
 “ cannot declare their opinion.

R 2

“ By

Letter

XII.



" By the 3d, on the demand, *whether the duke of Alençon holds his dutchy in peerage, and whether he ought to enjoy the privilege of peers?* the court answers in the affirmative.

" By the 4th, on the question, *whether the peers new created ought to be called in judgment with the antient ones, and enjoy the same honours?* the court answers again in the affirmative, and quotes the example of the three trials above-mentioned.

" By the 5th, on the question, *whether the peers ought to be called in judgment, whether it be sufficient to call them, and whether the proxies of those who do not come ought to be received to give their opinions with the present?* the court answers, that all the peers ought to be called; that if they come they must assist at the judgment, and that if they don't come, the king is not obliged to delay it; that no proxies are to be admitted; and for the whole they quote the examples of the three former trials, wherein the absent were excused, and not received to give their vote by proxy.

" By the 6th, on the question, *whether the king's presence is necessary at the judging and bearing the process, because it would be a great subjection both for*
 " him

him, and his successors, which neither he Letter
nor they would care to lay themselves un- XII.
der? the court answers; that no precise
necessity can be imposed upon the king
in that respect; but that the examples
already mentioned, insinuate his pre-
sence; and that the properest method
is for him to assist at the judgment and
the whole process.

"In fine, by the 7th, on the question,
whether the king's absence being caused
by publick business, he may not commission
somebody in his room? the court an-
swers, that in case of indispenfible bu-
siness, it is better to delay the hearing
and judgment of the trial in question."

These were the answers of the parlia-
ment to the consultation of a prince, who,
though irritated, and though absolute,
because the whole kingdom was properly
his conquest, would not punish an obnox-
ious criminal but according to rule, and
conformable to the strictest practice of
justice. Now, in my opinion, several
remarks may be made on the parliament's
answers. For we see, first, the firmness
and modesty of the antient magistracy,
who, without endeavouring to extend
their jurisdiction beyond the lawful limits,
or make use of the conjuncture, in which
the king, tired with affairs, seemed to have
a mind to abandon to them the trial of a

*Reflec-
tions on
the par-
liament's
answers.*

Letter peer of *France*, and one of the first princes
 XII. of the blood, sustain, that according to
 order, the peer has no judge but the king
 himself; and that if he has not leisure to
 assist in person at the trial, it is better to
 put it off to another time. 2. We may
 remark, that in those days they did not
 think there ought to be any difference be-
 tween the prerogatives of the antient and
 new peers. And, in fact, if we seriously
 consider it, we shall find that the duke of
Burgundy himself could not be looked up-
 on as an antient peer, but in quality of
 count of *Flanders*, which title devolved
 to him by right of succession; whereas
 that of duke of *Burgundy* was the effect of
 a private donation of king *John*, and a
 new erection in favour of one of his chil-
 dren, notwithstanding that he had united
 to his crown the title and property of the
 domain of that antient peerage: therefore
 we may say that the question, *whether*
the new peerages ought to enjoy the same
rights, honours, and prerogatives as the an-
tient peerages? is decided by the parlia-
 ment: but it is near 300 years ago, with-
 out reckoning the former practice observ-
 ed above 150 years together, from the
 reign of *Philip the Fair*, to that of *Charles*
VII. It is true, we may now object a-
 gainst the rank of the new peerages, that
 in former days those dignities were grant-
 ed

ed to none but princes of the house of Letter
France; so that we may conclude they XII.
have been villified, by being conferred on
the *noblesse*. But this idea cannot, howe-
ver, but appear very absurd, to any per-
son who pleases to call to mind the rank
and the rights of that *noblesse*; since the
youngest sons of the royal house did not
lay claim to any others, but those which
were common to every gentleman in the
kingdom, and that they esteemed it an ho-
nour to be of their body, that is to say, to
be reckoned in their number. And, in-
deed, would it not be a shame to our go-
vernment, that while the door to the dig-
nities of the magistracy is open to the
meanest burgher, by the facility of buy-
ing employments; the lustre of birth, the
greatness of services, and even the favours
of kings, could not procure, at least to a
few happy men drawn from the body of
the *noblesse*, the rank and pre-eminence
which they formerly enjoyed without di-
stinction, among those of the same order
and natural dignity; perhaps disagreeable,
because it does not favour all equally
alike: but since, in order to dispute the
custom of it, we must attack, or ra-
ther deny the fulness of the royal power,
which confers dignities, and creates new
peerages, is it not better to comfort our-
selves, with the consideration that there

Letter
XII.

are at present none but the peers who really are able to maintain the favour of their privileges, and the dignity of the *noblesse*, against the attempts of the lawyers, now vested with the titles of knights, counts, and marquesses, while the antient noble dares not, without a great deal of danger, write himself esquire, without leave of the intendant of the province. It were indeed to be wished, that among the great number of new peers, we could find more equality in the lustre of their origin, and that there had been more choice and knowledge in the monarchs who were pleased to raise them above other men. But in short, according to our present practice, every thing now depends on the will of the sovereign : therefore we ought, it seems, to content ourselves with wishing, that, amongst such as are honoured with so high a dignity, some may never lose the remembrance of the first of their qualities, which is that of gentlemen, and antient nobles, stript of the new chimæras of principality and definitive rank for their families, which their forefathers despised during so many ages ; and that the others may preserve more modesty and sincerity, to the end that not presuming that the advantages of favour and fortune are equal or superior to those of birth, they may be more disposed to respect

spect the latter in those who possess it solely by the grace of God, and the order of nature, without any assistance that is foreign to them. 3. We may observe, that in *Charles* the seventh's time, it sufficed to possess an estate with the title of peerage, to enjoy the rank and privilege of a peer, which are now attached to the being received as such by the parliament: this is what it has cost the peers for having been so desirous to convert their dignity into an office of the crown, forgetting that it was not till the reign of *Louis VIII.* in 1223, that those officers, to whose prerogative they endeavoured to attain, were admitted to sit in judgment amongst them; a function from which they were debarred before by their offices.

As to the rest, the same registers of the Order of parliament, which have preserved this consultation, likewise relate the order of sitting in the *bed of justice*, held at *Vendôme*, in 1458, for the trial of the duke of *Alençon*. The count *de Dunois* performed there the function of high chamberlain, and was seated at the foot of the throne: on the upper bench, at the right hand, were placed *M. Charles*, the king's son, about twelve years old; and at some distance from him, the dukes of *Orleans* and *Bourbon*; the count of *Angoulesme*, who, though nearer to the crown, yielded

Letter
XII.

*sitting of
the bed of
justice held
for the
condem-
nation of
the duke
of Alen-
çon.*

Letter ed precedency to the duke of *Bourbon*, on
 XII. account of the ducal title ; the count of
 ~~~~~ *Maine* in the same case ; the counts of  
*Eu*, *Foix*, *Vendosme*, and *Laval*. It is  
 remarkable, that on this occasion, the  
 counts, not peers, are seated in the  
 same rank with those who were so ;  
 and that the count of *Vendosme*, though  
 one of the lords of the *Flower de Luces*  
 is preceded by the count of *Foix*. The  
 manuscript chronicle of *Forrestel*, has,  
 nevertheless, advanced that the king cre-  
 ated them peers for this ceremony, or ra-  
 ther for the validity of the judgment ;  
 which would be a singularity still more  
 remarkable, but which is not authorised  
 any where else. Underneath that bench  
 was another inferior one ; on which were  
 seated the three presidents of the parlia-  
 ment ; the grand master de *Chabannes* ;  
 the admiral de *Montauban* ; the grand  
 prior of *France* ; the marquis de *Saluces* ;  
 four masters of the requests ; the sire of  
*Ramburres* ; *Gilles de St. Simon*, bailiff of  
*Sentis* ; and after them seventeen counsel-  
 lors of the parliament, being half of those  
 who were called to *Vendosme*. On the up-  
 per bench, on the left, sat the chancellor  
 of *France* ; *William Juvenal*, baron of  
*Traignel* ; the six ecclesiastick peers ; the  
 bishops of *Paris*, *Nevers*, and *Agde* ; the  
 abbot of *St. Denis* ; and below them, on  
 another bench, were the lord of *la Tour*  
*d'Au*

*d' Auvergne*; the lord of *Torcy*, of the Letter name of *Estouville*; the lord of *Vauvert*, XII. of the name of *Levi*; the bailiff of *Tou- raine*; the *fire* of *Prié*; the *fire* of *Presig- ny*; *William Cousinot*, bailiff of *Rouen*; and the *fire* of *Escarts*: and in another bench, four treasurers of *France*; among whom was *Peter d'Oriol*, afterwards chan- cellor; the prevost of the merchants, and of the marshals; the prevost of the king's *Hotel*; and, in fine, the seventeen other counsellors of the parliament. We may see by the detail of this session, how true the remark is which I often made in my former letters, that for a long time past there has been no settled system among us, either for rank or the law. In fact, not only the chancellor takes place here of the ecclesiastick peers, but the presidents of the parliament precede the officers of the crown, the grand master and the admiral; a thing never before practised, and which shews the vigilance of the lawyers, to take advantage of the then conjuncture, where the business in hand being a criminal process, there was an indispensable necessity to make use of them.

This was almost the last scene of *Charles* *The end of Charles the seventh's life.* the seventh's life. the seventh's life. 22d of *July*, 1461; some say of poison, and

Letter and others through fear of taking some in  
 XII. his victuals. He had reigned thirty-nine  
 years, with disgraces, and a prosperity quite uncommon; but especially with a conduct so clear, so exact, and so circumspect, that we may say, that if the happiness of a people could depend on the intention of their king, the happiness of *France* had been secured for several ages. He always foresaw the approaching alterations which his son would make in the administration, but without having the fortitude to put the necessary obstacles to prevent them; which he might easily have formed by a deliberation of the states-general, well concerted and supported by all the formalities for rendering it certain and inviolable. And thus it was that this most frugal and most methodical government made room for the most arbitrary reign, and the most contrary to the antient laws and regulations that *France* had ever yet endured.

*He is succeeded by Louis XI.*

*Louis XI.* aged thirty-eight, seemed to have acquired a sufficient maturity: he had even felt the useful contradiction of adversity, and opposition to his will, during the space of fourteen years: nevertheless, experience shews, by his example, that an evil temper never mends, since he became thereby but the more hardened, more inclined to revenge, and more covetous



tous of the wealth of private persons, of Letter  
which he was the first that imagined he XII.  
had a right to dispose, in order to make  
himself creatures; that is to say, in the sense  
he took it, people ready to commit any  
sort of crime, and obey all his commands.

It is said, that this prince united in his *His cha-*  
person all the odious qualities of several of *rafter.*  
his family; the fierce and bloody temper  
of king *John*, and *Philip* of *Valois*, his  
forefathers; the too great foresight of  
*Charles V.* the prodigality of *Louis* duke  
of *Anjou*, his maternal grandfather; the  
perfidy and malice of *Isabella* of *Bavaria*;  
and, in fine, the mistrustful temper of  
his father. But the picture of this prince  
having been drawn by an incomparable  
hand in the history of his time, it would  
be imprudent and rash to add any inferior  
strokes to it, 250 years after his death.



LETTER



## LETTER XIII.

*General considerations on the former reigns. Accession of king Louis XI. His character, and his conduct until the treaty of Conflans in 1465. Assembly of notables at Tours in 1463; and of the states-general at Tours the 6th of August, 1467.*

Letter  
XIII.

**I**N my former letters, I have run over the reigns of a great number of princes of divers characters: they all sat upon the same throne; but they all behaved in so different a manner, that except one single point, which was the idea of subduing their people, annihilating the great lords, and rendering their own authority despotick, we may say, that their maxims of government had no more connection with each other, than with those of the *Chinese* or *Tartarian* monarchies. We may, nevertheless, observe, that they did not fail to conduct their posterity to the end they proposed to themselves so many ages ago. But in order to attain that end effectually, the administration of cardinal *Richelieu*, and the reign of *Louis XIV.* made a greater

greater progress in ninety years, than all Letter  
the attempts of the preceding reigns could XIII.  
do in 1200. Give me leave then, sir, be-  
fore I enter into a detail of the reign of  
*Louis XI.* the ablest, and at the same  
time the most evil-minded of all our  
kings *until the fifteenth century*, to lead  
you to some moral and political reflections  
on the fate of the crown of *France* during  
the eleven centuries that preceded it.

Kings are men; but men are no longer *Consider-*  
what they were in the days of *Theseus* and *ations on*  
*Codrus* kings of *Athens*, nor what the Ro- *the reigns*  
*man* generals were, who so gloriously la- *which*  
boured for their country. Slavery, which *preceded*  
was conceived even in the bosom of liber- *that of*  
ty, and practised from the reign of *Louis XI.*  
*Augustus*, until the invasion of *Gaul* by the  
*French*, had accustomed the people to mis-  
take that sentiment, formerly so natural and  
so interwoven with the love of one's coun-  
try. In the room of that sentiment, there  
sprung up, as in our days, the only pas-  
sions allowed to those who have no longer  
the use of liberty; a thirst for money,  
expence, and vain amusement; because  
real and solid pleasures are unknown to  
those who are ignorant of the value of li-  
berty. Our *Frenchmen* were an ignorant  
unpolished people; but, nevertheless, pas-  
sionately fond of independency; so that  
the kings were obliged to manage them  
with



Letter with great address, as long as they retained  
 XIII. any sense of their origin: but the interruption of the military service, joined to sloth and idleness, having reduced them to forget themselves, they easily became the conquest of one of their own countrymen, who having formed his armies in *Germany*, came and triumphed over *France*, as any foreigner might also have done. Happily there issued from his blood, in the second generation, a prince truly great by his talents, and the qualities of his soul; but still greater by his good intention, accompanied with the learning and knowledge necessary for forming an excellent politician and legislator. You see very well that I mean CHARLEMAGNE, the institutor of the fiefs, the restorer of the parliaments or common assemblies, and the faithful preserver of equality among the *French*, the essential foundation of our constitution; which the kings have, nevertheless, overthrown, in order to substitute dignities of their own invention instead of it; in the eager pursuit of which, they engaged men greedily ambitious, and, at the same time, of extraction mean enough to stand in need of such titles. I said that the intention of this first emperor of the *French* was supported by his learning and knowledge: and, indeed, nothing greater can be imagined than the system

On  
 Charle-  
 magne's  
 reign.

system of the monarchy, such as he established it by the first partition he made amongst his children. Nevertheless, fate ordained that instead of this partition, the succession devolved entirely upon *Louis the* Letter XIII.  
*On Louis the \* Devout's.*

*Devout*; a person of a character as unfit to maintain its wise establishments, as he was incapable of conceiving the greatness and utility of them. He was not only devout, and supported the sentiments of devotion by a severity which he thought essential to his dignity; but he piqued himself on having so great a disgust to all human sciences, that, according to the historian who writ his life, he made use of none but scripture expressions in his common discourse; and could not imagine that there were any men still attached to the reading of poets or profane historians, since the time that the Holy Ghost was pleased to speak in the holy books. Such was the man who found himself charged with the success of the establishments formed by *Charlemagne*, and in whose hands they all perished by the same principle that had prevailed upon *Charles* to divide the monarchy amongst his children. For *Louis* attempting to imitate that disposition in quite different conjunctures, the

\* He is as often called the *Debonnaire*, in the French history, which signifies affable, courtly, &c. which was in a manner quite opposite to the main of his character.

Letter consequence was civil wars, which divided the domination, and made his successors lose the esteem, and afterwards the authority, without which a man bears in vain the titles of St. *Louis* and *Charlemagne*. I touch but slightly on these points of our history, supposing that you are sufficiently instructed in them by the perusal with which you were pleased to favour the works I destined for collecting them. The same reason will dispense with me from fixing your attention on the events of the rest of the second race, not one of those former kings having had any inclination to form a political system. I shall therefore proceed without scruple to the kings sprung from *Hugh Capet*; who, we may say, confined all his policy to the bringing the crown into his house, which had aspired to that dignity for 200 years together. We cannot then remark any other sort of foresight in him, than that of acquiring a larger dominion, and a more eminent title than what he was possessed of, without being able to say, that he ever proposed to himself either the felicity of the people, or the duty of kings, and the obligation they contract with their subjects, to render them happy, and secure their fortunes and their repose. All that he did seems to be reduced to a few donations to certain churches, because he stood

On the  
reign of  
Hugh  
Capet.



stood in need of the priests and monks, in Letter  
order to gain credit with those, who, XIII.  
through prepossession in favour of the  
blood of *Charlemagne*, still shewed them-  
selves averse to his usurpation; but the  
publick good never was his object: on the  
other hand, that prince was superstitious,  
as is evident by his watchings at *St. Ri-*  
*quier's* tomb, with a desire of knowing  
the destiny of his posterity: but *superstition*  
implies *ignorance*, and supposes a man  
very distant from the great and supreme  
views of a legislator, unless he acts in con-  
sequence of a natural disposition, which is  
still rarer than instruction, and has more-  
over the defect of never applying itself  
but to a known object, by a sort of ex-  
perience which in that respect supplies the  
place of education. Here I find myself  
embarrassed, lest in relating in this letter  
the detail of the conduct and the govern-  
ment of our monarchs, until *Louis XI*,  
I should fall into any needless repetitions,  
whatever care I may take to avoid them.  
However, as my design is not so much to  
give a detail of the actions, as that of the  
particular character of every prince, I hope  
I shall propose nothing to you but what is  
new; if not so in respect to general histo-  
ry, at least in regard to the letters which  
you suffer me to write to you.

Letter XIII. King *Robert*'s character does not appear to have differed from his father's: we find that he employed the advantages of his education in perfecting the church music, which he did not disdain to direct himself, and to compose hymns and anthems, in which we find a sort of ecclesiastical or monkish doctrine and taste: but in other respects we don't perceive that he was less eager to aggrandize himself by private means and stratagems. In his reign *France* was governed only as a great lordship, the vassals of which granted or refused obedience as they pleased, the king having neither force nor authority to constrain them: wherefore we need not wonder, that thus reduced to a private condition, though vested with the magnificent title of king of the *French*, neither *Robert* nor his successors had any general views besides those of acquiring and extending their dominions, when they had opportunity and power to do it; and in cases of necessity, employing the utmost violences, even so far as to rob and strip passengers in the woods and highways.

On Louis  
the Gros.

We have formerly said that *Louis the Gros*, taken up in his youth with petty private quarrels with the lords in the neighbourhood of *Paris*, *Rochefort*, and other places, was nevertheless the first who carried

carried his views to the consideration of Letter  
 general affairs, when the reputation of his XIII.  
 valour and capacity was sufficiently esta-  
 blished to procure respect to be paid to his  
 authority. In fact, he so effectually found  
 out the method to embarrass the great  
 vassals of the crown, such as the dukes of  
*Normandy*, kings of *England*, the counts  
 of *Flanders*, the dukes of *Aquitaine*, and  
 the counts of *Anjou*, and set them against  
 each other by the divisions which he knew  
 how to raise in their domestick affairs, that  
 he put it out of their power to op-  
 pose his designs. It was by these means  
 that in 1124, he obliged his feodotaries  
 of the provinces of *Paris*, *Orleans*, *Cham-*  
*pagne*, and *Picardy* alone, to form an ar-  
 my of 200,000 men, in order to oppose  
 the emperor *Henry* the fifth's intended  
 invasion of *France*: that he assumed to  
 himself the authority of judging between  
 the competitors to the county of *Flanders*,  
 after the death of *Charles* of *Denmark*,  
 killed at *Bruges* in the year 1127-8, and  
 sovereignly disposing of it in favour of  
*William* of *Normandy*, son to *Robert*:  
 that he ordered, even in the year 1118,  
*Aimon de Bourbon* to appear in his court, to  
 receive judgment for usurping the succes-  
 sion of his elder brother *Archambault*, in  
 prejudice of the son he had left: that at  
 different times he forced the lords of  
 S 3 *Marle*



Letter Marle, Coucy, St. Briçon, on the river

XIII. *Loire*, to submit to his justice: and, in fine, that he managed the duke of *Aquitaine's* temper with so much address and ability, that the duke, by marrying his daughter to *Louis the Young*, left *France* heir to his dominions at his death. It is therefore certain, that in the number of the *Capetian* kings, none of them before him knew better than he did how to make the most of conjunctures, to oppose, negotiate, flatter, threaten, and take advantage of every event. But after all, we plainly see that his fortune never was so great as to be able to give him any other authority in favour of the publick good, but that of punishing flagrant disorders after they had happened, and not that of preventing them.

Of Louis  
the  
Young.

*Louis the Young* was a very weak prince, if we judge of him by the two enormous faults he committed. By engaging himself in a war beyond sea, and abandoning *Aquitaine*; by repudiating his criminal wife, who was condemned at least by the voice of the publick, he never found himself in a condition to conceive or execute any thing for the publick good. But he left the crown to a prince who raised its splendor and authority, with more glory than it had had since the time of the *French* emperors. His minority was conducted

Of Phi-  
lip the  
August.

conducted by *Philip of Alsace*, count of *Flanders*, the best man of that time, who was so zealous in the education of his pupil, and the advancement of his interest, that having no children, he made him marry his neice, and gave for her portion the county of *Artois*, with the adjacent territories along the river *Lis*, and the lands holding of it. But gratitude is not always the favourite virtue of those who aim at becoming able politicians. *Philip* was prejudiced against the count of *Flanders*, by his uncle the cardinal of *Champagne*, who made himself master of the government, and instilled into him the notion of governing his state by artifice and discord; but nevertheless joining valour and force to them, according as occasion required. The pretext of defending the churches against the oppression of the lords, appeared above all things to be of great service to him: and that was the motive of the particular wars he undertook against the lords of *Charenton* in *Berry*, and *Beaujeu*, and the count of *Chalons*, on the river *Saone*. And, indeed, it was convenient for his project, to humble the weakest, and strike a terror into them before he attacked the strongest. The cardinal made him afterwards undertake a war against his benefactor the count of *Flanders*, out of whose hands he wrested

Letter  
XIII.



Letter *Picardy*, then called the county of *Ver-*  
 XIII. *mandois*. Soon after he led him into *Bur-*  
 gundy, where he forced the duke to very  
 hard terms of satisfaction, towards the  
 clergy of that dutchy. And these several  
 advantages giving him room to hope for  
 greater successes, he attacked the king of  
*England*, who was then possessed of half  
 of *France*; but whose old age and mis-  
 understanding with his children, greatly  
 diminished his power.

In this manner *Philip* governed *France*,  
 before the crusade; but at his return he  
 took still a greater liking to craftiness and  
 authority: a conduct which put him in  
 possession of *Normandy*, *Maine*, *Anjou*,  
*Touraine*, *Poitou*, and *Berry*: *England*  
 having never been able to get back such fine  
 provinces, through the misfortune of a di-  
 vision, which *Philip* knew how to conduct  
 and keep up with so much art, that *Louis*  
 his only son had thereby like to have be-  
 come king of *England*, having been  
 crowned in *London* with the consent of  
 the people and the grandees. Such was  
 the great *Philip*, called \* *Dieu-donné*, a  
 bold enterprising king; no way scrupulous,  
 but cautious, and almost timorous in re-  
 gard to the clergy, whose power he was  
 well acquainted with: so that he let the  
 pope and his councils dispose of their con-  
 quests over the *Albigenses* in prejudice of his

\* *Given by God, or God's gift.*

autho-



authority. We cannot, however, rank him in the number of just and well-meaning princes, witness the ordinance called *stabilimentum feudorum* of the year 1205, and in his youth, the law-suit carried on against one of the most virtuous princeesses that *France* ever had, *Isabeau of Hainault*; whose divorce, projected by the cardinal of *Champagne*, supported in his design by mercenary bishops, was defeated only by the opposition of the bishop of *Senlis*. It is not then in so ambitious and so crafty a character as this, that we must seek for the intention and the necessary talents for restoring a good and wise government, such as it was designed by *Charlemagne's* plan. On the contrary, we see that this prince studied nothing but how to destroy the particular lordships, and unite them to his domain; and that with this view he imagined in the beginning, that it would be impossible to succeed in it without introducing the custom of keeping up troops in pay; a thing unknown till his reign.

*Louis VIII.* did not live long; but in his short reign we have very certain testimonies that the most solemn oaths were not, in his opinion, an unsurmountable engagement; and that his zeal against heretics was often stirred up by his own interest. In other respects he was pious and devout, according to the fashion of those days, with-

Letter without knowing any thing of the gospel or  
 XIII. its principles : a situation very distant from  
 ~~~~~ that of a christian and enlightened king, who  
 thinks he owes to his people, besides good
 government under his authority, the neces-
 sary precautions to prevent its being ever a-
 bused by his successors. Nevertheless, we find
 that all those princes since *Louis VI.* seem
 to have applied themselves in some mea-
 sure to the order of justice ; having sup-
 ported the use of the parliaments, which
 ought to have been considered as the pub-
 lick tribunal of the nation, had there
 been more liberty and knowledge of na-
 tural right in them. But to judge of them
 by that of *Melun* (for we know nothing that
 can exceed it) we cannot help forming a
 most lamentable idea both of the king,
 who was at the head of it, and the lords
 and prelates by whom it was composed.

Of St.
 Louis.

Louis IX. full of justice and the exactest
 piety, and moreover, always guided by the
 purest intentions, certainly wanted know-
 ledge for governing his kingdom on a solid
 plan, suitable to its dispositions. We may even
 add, that far from being acquainted with
 them, he seems to have opened the door
 to all the disorders which have happened
 since his reign. In fact, this king so
 mild, and so compassionate, in regard to
 the necessities of other men, took it frank-
 ly

ly into his head, that he was accountable to God for all the evil that might happen in his kingdom : in that persuasion he contrived courts of justice, or of resort and appeal, which had never been in use before; he established four great bailiwicks, in order to secure this new police, and vested the officers whom he put into them, with the power to take cognizance of the causes of ecclesiasticks and privileged persons, of which he was pleased to strip the great fiefs still remaining at that time. It was then no longer time to oppose the king's will, except one was far enough from him not to dread his hearing of it. Besides, *St. Louis*, under a pretext of rendering the judgments of the parliament more exact, introduced the lettered men into it, on account of the extreme and notorious ignorance of the lords and ecclesiasticks it consisted of; and we see by the rolls we have left, that those lettered men held a rank there very unsuitable to them, above all that was great in the state. These are the most signal actions performed by the good *St. Louis* in favour of his people, without minding the abuses which might be the consequences of this excessive increase of the authority of the kings: which abuses waited, indeed, but the second generation to break out. So true is it, that *Devouts* are always much more enclined to assume to them-

Letter
XIII.



Letter themselves the power of doing the good
 XIII. they fancy, than to leave to other men that
 of which they are in legal possession.

There is little to be said of *Philip III*, whose knowledge and capacity were very narrow. But his successor furnished a vast subject for reflections in my former letters, as did likewise the reigns of his three children and immediate successors; in which, nevertheless, we can observe no other view but that of a personal interest, reduced to the meanest and most contemptible maxims in civil society, and consequently the most odious in great men.

Charles
 V.

The sequel of the history obliges us next to consider the kings of the house of *Valois*; among whom we can find but one that was wise; but who, on the other hand, was self-interested, litigious, attached to formalities and trifles: a quality inconsistent with the character of a genius capable of forming and executing what was of most advantage to the publick good, according to the juncture of affairs. We see, on the contrary, that *Charles V.* loved money too much; induced thereto by a minister, a cardinal, who being of very mean birth, could not conceive that any thing was so useful as the heaping up treasure; which was, nevertheless, dissipated and plundered two months after the death of that prince, who had drawn it from his

his people in the midst of the calamities of an intestine war, that continued afterwards during the space of forty years. Letter XIII

Thus this treasure was of no use to its master, and never was in the possession of his successor. And, indeed, if we reflect a little on the publick good, on the administration and government of a monarchy, we shall find that as there are times favourable to certain discoveries, in like manner there are others so barren in expedients, that states perish in the midst of the most evident resources, for want of genius to make use of them. And experience teaches us further, that private men perceive those resources when princes remain blinded by a sort of fatality, which gave rise to the famous maxim, *Quorum Deus vult fortunam perdere consilia corrumpit*. But on the other hand, that maxim has this impropriety in it, that it makes us look upon the fortune of princes as the only object of providence, without considering the people, or the condition or fortune of states, of which princes cannot be the patrimonial possessors, but in the supposition of the system of the fiefs, by which the kings of *France*, who have abused it so much, reaped nevertheless so much benefit, that we may say it was the only thing that maintained them on the throne, without throwing either their personal merit

Letter merit of good conduct into the scale, as
XIII. is proved by the detail of their several
reigns.

Of
Charles
VI.

Charles VI. succeeded *Charles V.* but his government must be considered in the same light with those of king *John* and *Philip of Valois*, his fore-fathers; whose disorderly conduct and wrong notions of arbitrary and despotick power, contrary to all the rules of justice and customs, and against natural right and publick faith, drew upon unhappy *France* the storm of the *English* war, which would have ruined the monarchy at last, if destiny had not filled *England* in its turn with divisions and jealousies, and placed a prince on that throne, who seemed to have inherited his grandfather's folly rather than his crown. Such is then the common fate of hereditary monarchies, which gives birth to fifty bad, unskilful, mad, or evil-minded princes, for one of great courage and good understanding: these two qualities being the essential foundation, without which it is absurd to hope that a prince will ever have any solid and effectual views to the publick good.

Charles
VII.

In fine, we have seen that *Charles VII.* instructed by experience and adversity, without having either a brilliant wit, or a cheerful character, but a free and upright heart, supported with courage and

a good intention, in a few years recover'd Letter
his kingdom out of its ruins, by a wise XIII.
police, that had something in it of the ~~~~~
antient establishments which time and
war had destroyed. There is but one
thing to add to the detail we have given
of it, *viz.* the blame of the little precau-
tion that prince took against the abuses
which his successors, and particularly his
own son, might introduce by it. It is
true, that full of a just resentment of the
ill-conduct of that undeniable heir to his
crown, he thought less of averting the di-
stant misfortunes which threatened the
state, than of taking measures to frustrate
the particular and daily attempts of that
unnatural son against his authority, and e-
ven against his life; which was the rea-
son that he neglected the remedies he
ought to have employed, in order to ob-
struct the designs he had formed to ruin
the fortune of all his creatures, and to a-
buse, rather than make use of the pitch
of grandeur and authority to which the
monarchy was raised since the expulsion
of the *English*. Now, there is no man
but is sensible at present, that if *Charles*
VII. had assembled the states-general, and,
according to the antient custom, restored
them to the right of advising the mo-
narch both in regard to war and peace;
of chusing proper persons for filling the
civil

Letter civil and military employments ; of con-
 XIII. fenting to imposts, and granting the pe-
 cuniary aids necessary for the publick ser-
 vice ; and in fine, that if he had restored
 the body of the *noblesse* to their natural
 rights, and the advantages they pos-
 sessed before the *English* war, the enjoy-
 ment of which was interrupted only to
 preserve the throne to the house of *Valois*
 (a thing naturally very indifferent to the
 whole state, and which nothing but the
 affection of the *French* rendered necessary)
Charles VII. would, undoubtedly, by that
 single method, have solidly and effectual-
 ly prevented all the calamities which o-
 verwhelmed *France* after his death. But
 some remains of complaisance for the sub-
 mission shewn to his son by all the orders
 of the state, joined to his natural timi-
 dity, and in short the want of a council
 firm and honest enough, were the cause
 that, after attempting in vain to disinhe-
 rit that disobedient rebellious son, he com-
 prehended at last, that it would be im-
 possible to put the second on the throne,
 who was too young, and of too weak a
 complexion to go through a civil war,
 without exposing him to a certain ven-
 geance, which might cost him his life ; and
 therefore he chose rather to refer his cause
 and that of *France* to destiny, and the
 chance of events.

It

It was then in these odious circumstances, that *Louis XI.* mounted the throne. He was conducted to *Rheims* by *Philip the Good*, duke of *Burgundy*, who had given him a retreat in his dominions during his disgrace, and was crowned the 15th of *August* 1461, with all possible solemnity, and an extraordinary concourse of *noblesse* and lords. The king created several knights in that ceremony ; but the principal circumstance that happened, was the homage performed by the duke of *Burgundy* his benefactor ; after which the good prince asked pardon on his knees, for all those whom he thought had offended him during his father's reign, and begged him to grant it, in the first place, for the love of God ; in the next, to shew that he was pleased with the services he had rendered him in his exile ; but chiefly, for his own glory, and the peace of the kingdom, which could not be at rest without a total oblivion of all the faults that might have been reciprocally committed. The king indeed promised it, but excepted certain persons whom he would not then name ; and under the pretext of that exception, he fully shewed afterwards that he had not pardoned any of them.

Letter
XIII.
~~~~~  
Louis the  
XI.'s  
reign.  
His coro-  
nation.

From *Rheims* he made his entry into *Paris* with a prodigious retinue, and soon after he took a journey into *Bretagne*, under the pretext of a pilgrimage ; but in reality to re-



Letter connoitre the strength of the country himself,  
 XIII. and endeavour to settle some private correspondence in it. He had formed a design to carry off the dutchess of *Bretagne*, widow of duke *Peter*, in order to marry her to the duke of *Savoy*, his brother-in-law; and she was to have been brought up the *Loire*: but the very night that the project was to be put in execution, the river was frozen over, tho' but in the month of *November*. This both the king's and the dutchesses friends looked upon as a miracle, because that princess had made a vow to be a *Carmelite* nun, which vow she performed as soon as she found herself at liberty to do so.

Character  
 of that  
 prince.

*Louis XI.* had, without dispute, great talents for governing; a clearness and wonderful vivacity of judgment; a singular quickness of imagination; a great deal of art and facility of speech; great courage in war, and a liberality worthy of the primitive heroes. But on the other hand, he had no sincerity of heart: his resolutions never aimed at any thing but craft and disguise, which his petulant temper often discovered to men of even the lowest abilities; but he had likewise the art of concealing them very well from those who were capable of being ensnared by the splendor of his dignity, and his seeming familiarity, which was ever dangerous even to his confidants. Nevertheless, his self-love, which attributed every thing to him-

himself without measure, and without at- Letter  
tention to his duty, was the most fatal of XIII.  
all his bad qualities; because it was the ve-  
ry quality that made a distinction between  
the interest of the monarch, and the inte-  
rest of the state: a distinction which has  
ever since unfortunately subsisted in the  
hearts of our kings, except *Louis XII.*  
and *Henry IV.* who seem to have some-  
times sacrificed their private interest to the  
general and common advantage of their  
country. Moreover, *Louis XI.* made pro-  
fession of being implacable in his resent-  
ment, and the hatred he had once de-  
clared: but still it is observed, that when  
he knew of any men of capacity among  
his enemies, he was less intent upon hating  
than gaining them over to his side, and that  
when he had once attached them to him,  
by benefactions and excessive liberalities,  
he afterwards placed a much more unre-  
served confidence in them than in any of  
his old servants. To which we must  
further add, that he was infinitely subject  
to his humour, or rather particular ca-  
price; the least suspicion blotted out all  
manner of remembrance of former ser-  
vices; and motives to that suspicion were  
often drawn from the slightest signs of con-  
tradiction to his will; while, on the o-  
ther hand, he would not take offence at  
a declared opposition, when he thought  
he had discovered the cause of it, either

Letter  
XIII.

in the interest of the person that made it, or in a principle of evident justice; whether he had in reality any respect for justice, or whether he fixed his reputation to that point. His superstition was beyond all measure, and we should hardly believe history in that article, had it not preserved indisputable evidence of it; yet, with all his devotion, he had no true idea of religion: pilgrimages, relicks, images, votive masses, were the greatest objects of his piety; while his heart, filled with jealousy, revenge, and the basest designs, was in some measure inaccessible to the common sentiments of humanity. Covetous of the wealth of his subjects, without either rule or caution, he was profusely liberal towards the least of those whom he thought he could employ in the execution of some odd, fantastick design; and never gave any thing but with regret, to those who had been really serviceable to him, when the fancy of employing them was over. In other respects, never did a prince so easily deliver himself up to the passions of hope and fear, which rendered him the most restless and agitated king that we know of in history. He trusted as much to his dexterity and skill, as he mistrusted events: a reason which prevailed upon him to be every where, and manage every thing himself. Negligent of his reputation



tation in the article of probity, he maintained it at all hazards in relation to courage. We have still one of his letters to the grand master *de Chabannes*, in which he proves that he exposed his person at *Arras*, where he was wounded, because the duke of *Bretagne* had cast some aspersions on his courage in war. Tho' familiar and sincere in appearance, no monarch ever exacted more submission; and tho' such a character seems but little susceptible of the baits of flattery, never did any prince so much favour men of mean birth and and infamous character, whom he drew near his person in order to receive from them in private, those applauses which the voice of the people denied him in publick; or, what was still much worse, to execute the bloody and fatal resolutions he had taken, to which those wretches were always disposed; such were the cardinal *de la Balue*, the abbot of *St. John d'Angeli*; *Tristan l'Hermite*, *Oliver le Daim*, and several others. Thus the character of *Louis XI.* was really a medley of qualities as opposite to each other, as they were contrary to his repose and his glory; tho' they were favourable to his policy, which was the soul and *primum mobile* of all that he did or thought. We must, however, acknowledge, that notwithstanding the reproaches cast on his memory these

Letter \* 250 years past, it is nevertheless that policy which, according according to the old saying, brought the kings out of leading-strings (*hors de page*) by punishing them with the maxims and practices upon which they built the despotick power they now exercise.

Louis  
XI. turns  
out all his  
father's  
ministers.

This king took possession of the sovereign power, to which he had so long aspired, in the worst of dispositions for the grandees and the people; that is to say, with a resolution to treat *France* as a conquered country: being persuaded that his father's memory was in too great veneration, for him to be able to flatter himself that they would forget the injuries he had done him. This is what determined him to turn out all the officers employed by *Charles VII.* either in the war, the administration of justice, or the finances: which, in fact, was the sole motive of setting the duke of *Alençon* at liberty, restoring the house of *Armagnac* to its possessions, and revoking the *pragmatick sanction*, which had been the master-piece of the last reign. But besides those alterations, he had two other objects in view, which took up his whole life; so far did he think them worth the utmost efforts of his capacity and power. Those objects were no less than the destruction of the two houses of *Bretagne* and *Burgundy*.

And proposes the ruin of the houses of Burgundy and Bretagne.

\* This chronology will do at present, tho' it was faulty in the time the author writ, which was above twenty years ago. Perhaps the error may be owing to the editor of his works in French,

gundy.

*Burgundy*: the first weak in appearance, and easily to be disturbed, by dividing the lords in a province then little better than barbarous: the second, extremely powerful, both in the vast extent of its dominions, and the good administration of the reigning prince; who had also an infinite advantage over *Louis XI.* by the notoriety of the friendly offices which that king had receiv'd from the duke, and which ought to have made him love and protect his house, instead of contriving its destruction: but a secret antipathy against the count of *Charolois*, which *Louis*, nevertheless, knew how to conceal three years together, under all the appearances of friendship, determin'd him, at last, in the course of the fourth year, to attempt to get him carried off from the midst of his dominions, even from the *Hague*, which then began to be one of the most considerable towns in *Holland*. That enterprize, however, had not the expected success; but left all the infamy of it to the king, and to the count of *Charolois*, the heir of *Burgundy*, all the resentment it deserved.

Letter  
XIII.

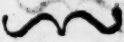
*Origin of  
the war  
called for  
the pub-  
lick good.*

It was then that the old duke's prudence and love of peace gave way to the desire of revenge: and the facility he found to take it speedily, and with reputation, lighted up in 1465, the war of the *publick good*; which, properly speaking, was a general revolt of all the *grandeecs* of the king-



Letter XIII. kingdom; and in which the king would have been infallibly borne down, if *Paris* had not remained in his interest; and if his policy, superior to all the designs of his enemies, had not found means to divide them. The duke of *Bretagne*, who could bear no longer with *Louis XI.* had had recourse to the protection of *England*; \* *but as it was very expensive to him*, he betook himself to intriguing. He made a strict league with the malecontent lords, and by their means at last gained over to his side the duke of *Berry*, the king's only brother, a prince of a very slender capacity, but whose father's tenderness to him had rendered him dear to the nation. They pitied his case, that they had not a subsistence proportioned to his birth and his years; the king delaying to deliver his appenage to him, lest part of the nobility should attach themselves to his person, if he was in a condition to procure establishments for them. Thus the interest of the *grande*es, which was to counterbalance

\* *This is a terrible sarcasm on England, and what makes it so, is the justice of it. The duke of Bretagne ought to have been supported, even at the expence of England, in order to prevent the dutchy of Bretagne from ever falling into the hands of France, which did us incredible damage the last war from the single port of St. Malo. But we have ever been penny wise and pound foolish: and about the time the author speaks of, all the great lords of the English council were pensioners to Louis XI. so much did private interest then get the better of the publick good of the English nation.*  
the

the authority of a capricious wilful king, Letter  
but without children, by the idea of the XIII.  
rising fortune of his younger brother, who   
was presumptive heir to the crown, uniting  
to the general tenderness and compassion  
for him, soon made him a person of consequence, whose name alone drew half  
the kingdom into the revolt. *Louis* the  
eleventh's policy did not allow his brother  
to be far from him ; so that he was the  
inseparable companion of all his travels,  
which were almost continual, from one  
end of the kingdom to the other. Their  
occupations at a time when there was yet  
no regular court, and consequently neither  
assembly of ladies nor play, were nothing  
but walking and hunting. On the  
other hand, he received no instruction ;  
the king being prejudiced against learning :  
so that finding himself without either credit  
or authority, and without amusements,  
he listened more readily to the private advice  
given him concerning his fortune.

But before the entire bursting out of *States of*  
this war of the publick good, *Louis*, *Tours.*  
whose penetration could not be deceived  
by the dissimulation of the malecontents,  
assembled the notables in the city of *Tours*,  
in the month of *December*, 1463, in  
some measure to calm the minds of the  
people, and gain time for subduing *Bre-*  
*tagne*, while the old age of the duke of  
*Burgundy*, and the slowness of his resolutions,

Letter tions, might leave him at leisure to do it.

**XIII.** We are ignorant at present of the form of that assembly, as well as of the number and condition of those that composed it. All that we know, is, that *Charles* duke of *Orleans*, whose age, integrity, and rank, made him be looked upon as the second man in the state, having spoke against the abuses in the government, his remonstrances were received with a secret anger, and so much contempt, that he died with grief of it two days after, that is to say the 4th of *January*, leaving a prince under two years old, who afterwards came to the crown.

*The king acknowledges Sforza duke of Milan, in prejudice of the duke of Orleans, and gives him Genoa and Savonna.*

*Louis XI.* had for a long time used the duke of *Orleans* ill, because his reputation alone gave him umbrage; and that was the reason which made him acknowledge *Francis Sforza*, the first of that name, duke of *Milan*, in prejudice of the right of the duke of *Orleans*, who was the son of *Valentina Visconti*, legitimate heiress to that great state. *Sforza's* only title was by his having married the bastard daughter of the late duke, he himself being the bastard of another *Sforza*, better known in history. In that year 1464, *Louis* added to this acknowledgment the donation of the lordship of *Genoa*, of which the king of *France* had been a long time in possession; and to fill up the measure, he added to it the town of *Savonna*, which they



they had always reserved to themselves; Letter signifying, at the same time, to all the XIII. princes of *Italy*, that he would look upon his enemies, all such as should assist the *Genoese* against the duke of *Milan*.

About the end of the year 1464, that *The duke* is to say the 4th of *March*, the duke of *Berry* Berry, conducted by the bastard of *Ar-* <sup>escapes</sup> *magnac*, and the lord of *PEscun*, got a- <sup>from the</sup> way from the court, then at *Poitiers*, un- <sup>king's</sup> der favour of an embassy which the duke <sup>court, and</sup> of *Bretagne* sent to the king. This flight <sup>his flight</sup> was the signal of a general rising of all the <sup>is follow-</sup> lords of the kingdom. The duke of <sup>ed by a</sup> *Bourbon*, and *Anthony de Chabannes* count <sup>general</sup> of *Dammartin*, who, having escaped out of the *Bastile* by a ladder of ropes, and full of resentment of the ill usage he had met with there, seized upon *Berry*, the tower of *Bourges*, and all the places of *Bourbonnois* and *Auvergne*, and took the revenues into their own hands. This de- <sup>revolt.</sup> termined the king to turn his arms immediately to that side, where he had great success at first; which, nevertheless, came to nothing but a treaty, wherein the king lost all his advantages, as well because the princes afterwards refused to put it in execution, as because he found himself obliged to march speedily towards *Paris*, near which place the count of *Charolois*, having traversed *Picardy*, the isle of *France*, and the river *Seine*, came and took post at

*Mont-*

Letter *Mont-le-Hery*, in order to wait the army  
XIII. of *Bretagne* led by the duke of *Berry*.

Thus all the princes and the lords of the blood, except the count of *Maine* alone, the king's uncle, the chiefs of the *noblesse*, and all the militia of *France*, were in arms against their lawful sovereign before the capital city, which the presence alone of *Louis* hindered from turning against him. However, he had the good fortune to fight his enemies separately; and as it was uncertain which side got the victory, we may judge that if they had been united, he would have found it a very hard matter to escape their resentment. Chance alone made the count of *Charolois* master of the field of battle; and that was the snare which fortune laid for him, in order to incline him, during the rest of his life, to all sorts of warlike enterprizes, which in the end cost him his life, and the fortune of his house. From *Corbeil*, whither the king suffered himself to be carried the night after the battle, he soon got to *Paris*; and by a fine imitation of the usual conduct of princes, too rigid in prosperity, and too weak under adversity, he published an ordinance for abolishing all the imposts, except those which made part of the five great farms. He likewise established a council for the government, drawn from the parliament, the university, and

and the body of the city : and thus it was Letter  
that *Louis XI.* more jealous of his autho- XIII.  
rity than of his glory, passed a sentence of  
condemnation upon all his former con-  
duct. The princes, on their side, let their  
numerous troops moulder away, without  
employing them to attack *Paris*, which  
they might easily have forced. They i-  
maged at first that they might reduce it  
by famine : after which having entered  
into a negociation during the king's ab-  
sence, they had like to have been received  
into the city without striking a blow. The  
king's sudden return made this great design  
miscarry, when on the point of execution,  
and contrary to his expectation ; for he  
was resolved, if he had found the confe-  
derates in the city, to retire to *Italy*, and  
take shelter in the dominions of his faith-  
ful friend the duke of *Milan*, who gave him  
but one single advice on that occasion, *viz.*  
to grant to every one of the confederates  
whatever they asked for their private ad-  
vantage, because it was the only method  
to divide them.

With that view, the king, after several  
private proposals, opened a publick con-  
ference near *Conflans*, wherein no scruple  
was made of selling the fortune of a state  
by private rewards. In this treaty the  
duke of *Berry* obtained the dutchy of  
*Normandy*; the count of *Charolois*, the  
cities along the river *Somme*, and the  
coun-

*Treaty of  
Conflans  
between  
the king  
and the  
confede-  
rates.*



Letter counties of *Boulogne*, *Montreuil*, and  
 XIII. *Ponthieu*; the duke of *Bretagne*; the confirmation of the rights of regalia, which the king disputed with him, and a vast sum of money to indemnify him for his expences; the count of *Armagnac* had his lands restored him; the count of *St. Pol* got the constable's sword, and so forth of the rest. The inferior posts, bailiwicks, captainries, governments, or lieutenant-generalships, were almost abandoned to the favourites of the princes; but with this singular attention in the king, not to give any thing suitable to their capacities, but only what might be an occasion of quarrel and dispute between the best friends. Pensions were lavished away in paper and briefs: for *Louis* was fully resolved never to pay any, but to those who might be really useful to him. Thus every body being satisfied, the army broke up, in order for the several bands to follow the lords who had brought them before *Paris*, and were returning to their respective provinces.

Nevertheless, the duke of *Bretagne* undertook to conduct the duke of *Normandy* into his new appanage, not only to secure him the possession of it, but also with a view of governing that unexperienced prince, and to make himself always so much the more formidable to the king his brother. On the other hand, the duke of *Calabria*, and the old captains who had been

been attached to *Charles VII.* pretending that the confidence of the new duke was due to them, gave rise to a disturbance which made him lose the whole appenage, the king losing no time to make himself master of it. 'Tis thus that a great politician, who may sometimes be brought into a snare by his passions, knows how to remedy the disorders he himself has caused, by complying with necessity : but it is very rare to find any so wise in these junctures as our king *Louis XI.* of whom we may safely say, that if he had had as much uprightness of heart, as extent and strength of genius, and penetration for judging of the characters of men and their several interests, he would have deserved a rank among the worthiest of our monarchs. But by a fatality which has presided in all the events of the world, independent of the religion of every country, and of which *Louis* felt the effect in a particular manner by the conspiracy of the *publick good* ; there never was an unjust prince, but what was \* punished, either in his own person, or in his immediate posterity, for the disorders of his government. The same may be said of those who have neglected the publick esteem ; because both the one and

Letter  
XIII.

\* This is true to a demonstration ; and yet very few princes make any use of the manifold examples they meet with of this nature in history : or, to speak more justly, very few princes read history at all.

Letter the other arm, in a manner, all mankind  
 XIII. against them, either through contempt,  
 or despair and anger.

*Assembly  
 of notables  
 convoked  
 at Paris.*

In the month of *July*, 1466, *Louis*, who had so well experienced the necessity of calming the minds of so numerous a people as that of the kingdom of *France*, called an assembly of notables, which was opened at *Paris* on the 16th of *July*, being the anniversary of the battle of *Mont-le-Hery*. In this assembly, they proceeded first of all to the nomination of twenty-one commissioners, who were to make a total reformation in the administration of justice and the finances of the kingdom. But though the count of *Dunois*, become one of the favourites since the treaty of *Conflans*, was at the head of this commission, yet they concluded nothing of importance, or of any benefit to the publick; because the city of *Paris* was so depopulated by sickness, that in order to bring inhabitants to it, the king was obliged to make it an asylum for the banished and the criminals of all countries: part of whose posterity having peopled the city at first, raised themselves afterwards, by means of the dignities of the magistracy, to the rank of families of distinction.

*Death of  
 the duke  
 of Bur-  
 gundy,  
 whose son  
 makes a  
 league  
 with some  
 lords a-  
 gainst the  
 king.*

The following year, the king sustained a considerable loss in the person of *Philip* duke of *Burgundy*; inasmuch as the succession devolving to his son, the latter,

who



who personally hated *Louis*, whose artifices he flattered himself to confound one time or another, gave full swing to his passion, and began to treat again with the dispossessed duke of *Normandy*, and with the duke of *Bretagne* his faithful ally. In fact, in the month of *October* 1467, the king had notice given him that the duke of *Alençon*, formerly condemned in *Charles* the seventh's reign, and since restored to his estates by himself, had entered into the confederacy, and promised to deliver up his places. But whatever chagrin *Louis* might receive from the danger of a second civil war, it seems he was immediately comforted by the facility with which he debauched the count of *Perche*, the duke of *Alençon*'s eldest son, and prevailed upon him to deliver him the castle of *Alençon*, a very important place in those days. 'Tis thus that a professed politician is always ready to bear the treachery of other people, provided he makes himself amends by another, less expected and more sensible. This loss so astonished the confederate princes, that for fear some greater success should attend the king, they accepted an accommodation, upon the proposition of referring the appanage of the pretended duke of *Normandy* to the decision of the states-general of the kingdom. We cannot believe that *Louis* XI. ever made that

Letter  
XIII.

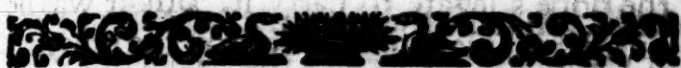
The confederate  
princes  
accept an  
accommodation.

Letter XIII. proposal *bonâ fide*, though he made use of the pope's legate to carry it. But it was he himself that labour'd to destroy the pragmatic sanction, and to whom the university of *Paris* in a body had signified their appeal to the future council, viz. the cardinal de *Jouffroy*, bishop of *Alby*; who being born a subject of the duke of *Burgundy*, and raised by the protection of *Philip the Good*, was looked upon by the king as the fittest person to bring the princes to his ends.

The assembly of the states-general was then appointed by an ordinance from the king, after the two dukes had accepted their mediation, to be held at *Tours* the first day of *April*, 1467-8, because *Easter-Sunday* did not happen that year till the 17th of that month. The king himself opened and closed the assembly the 6th and the 14th of the same month, in the manner which shall be resumed in my next.



LETTER



L E T T E R XIV.

*Containing the session of the states at Tours in April 1468. Several intrigues of Louis the eleventh's reign. Assembly of the notables at Tours in 1470. The ordinance of Amboise given in consequence of it. And several reflections on the conduct of this reign.*

**T**HE politick stroke by which Louis XI. prevail'd upon his brother the duke of Berry, to refer himself to the decision of the states of the kingdom concerning the extent and revenue of his appenage, as well as the choice of the lands to be delivered to him for furnishing it, was, without dispute, very disadvantageous to that king in particular, and the interest of the state in general; if we suppose, that the union of the body of the monarchy, and the destruction of all the particular powers, ought to be looked upon as the principle spring of the tranquillity and welfare of the subjects. But indeed, the voice of the publick, and the interior sentiments of the people, make a very great difference between those two ob-

Letter  
XIV.

*Reflections upon the effects of despotism.*



Letter jects: because it is out of all manner of  
 XIV. doubt, that if the common obedience of  
 ~~~~~ all the members secures the repose of the  
 head, it does not preserve the subject ei-
 ther from oppression, which is the neces-
 sary consequence of the caprice of princes,
 or from the vexations of their ministers. It
 is very certain, that passive obedience,
 whether practised through a principle of
 religion, or through fear of punishment,
 stifles the cry of the miserable; but, far
 from bettering their condition, it is no less
 evident, that it delivers them up but so
 much the more to injustice, because it
 stops their complaints, or renders them
 useless against prejudice alone, tho' the a-
 buse of authority should not interfere in
 the case. This is what has been notori-
 ously proved by two publick events of the
 last century, which may be looked upon
 as the greatest effects that can possibly be
 produced by absolute authority. One is
 the expulsion of the *Moors* out of *Spain*
 in the year 1615, by the authority of *Phi-*
lip III; and the revocation of the edict of
Nantes is the other; an edict by which the
 exercise of the religion, called reformed,
 had been allowed in *France* ever since the
 time that *Henry* IV. had abandoned that
 religion, in order to reconcile himself to
Rome, and peaceably possess a kingdom he
 had conquered. Now, it cannot be de-
 nied

nied that both these events passed with extreme violence in those that executed them, and with all the patience imaginable in those who practised that obedience, which some people pretend is the principle of the welfare of all subjects. I grant that their condition would have been much worse if they had resisted the determined will of their sovereigns: but that will itself did not secure them from injustice; it did not protect their effects from plunder and pillage, nor their persons from high ransoms, from racks and tortures, nor even from the most cruel and inhuman executions, according to the humour of each prince's orders.

Let us then say again, because truth exacts that confession from us, that if *Marcus Aurelius*, he that was a very absolute himself, laid it down as a maxim, *That the people cannot be happy, but when kings are philosophers, or when philosophers become kings*; as this position is so rare that the history of the world does not furnish an example of it, we must conclude that there can be no security for the people, but in the states governed according to the plans given by the antient destroyers of the *Roman* empire, of which there are no traces left but in *England*; or, at least, in those countries where there is a sufficient number of great lords and established princes remaining, to give sanctuary to part of the wretched

Letter wretched, which unlimited power can-
 XIV, not fail to make ; if not through an evil
 intention, at least through want of know-
 ledge. Pardon this digression, which has
 slipped from my pen in treating of the govern-
 ment of *Louis XI.* Consider that govern-
 ment as the origin of despotism, exercised
 without either faith, caution, or consid-
 eration, to the total ruin of the subjects,
 both high and low ; who, as you will see
 in the course of this letter, were deliver'd
 up to poison, to fire, to sword, to capti-
 vity, to torments of various kinds, and in
 general to false politicks, which made him
 prefer the satisfaction of cunningly conduct-
 ing an intrigue, and tricking his enemy,
 to the repose of his conscience, to his ho-
 nour, and to his reputation with poste-
 rity.

States of
 Tours.

The city of *Tours* seemed to have been
 pitched upon for the greater conveniency
 of monsieur *Charles* of *France*, who had
 taken up his residence in *Bretagne*. But
 the king took effectual measures that he
 should reap no advantage by it : in the first
 place, because * *he made sure of the ma-
 jority of the deputies, either by directing*

* *Here is a demonstration that this practice did not
 take its origin in England, tho' it must be confessed
 that the soil is fertile enough for it and French pen-
 sions to thrive in.*

the

the choice of them in the provinces by the precise orders he gave, or else by gaining with his usual liberalities those whom he judged proper to influence the votes of others of a meaner capacity : secondly, because he would be present himself at the assembly, in order to intimidate those whom either sentiments of honour, or interests contrary to his will, might prevail upon to side with his brother : in short, because he, in a manner, quite overturned the order of the sitting and debates, to substitute a sort of tumultuous acclamation instead of them, in which neither the votes of the princes, nor those of particular deputies, were regarded or reckoned. The opening of the states was not performed till the *Wednesday 6th of April*, before *Palm-Sunday* ; as well because the king was very glad that the near approach of the festival of *Easter* might hinder the length of the debates, as on account of fitting up the hall of the archbishop's palace for their meeting, which unavoidably took up some days more than was expected.

DU TILLET has given the order of the session, by which we find that the hall was divided into three spaces, separated from each other by timber partitions, breast-high, hung with tapestry, according to the dignity of the place : that the first space, raised higher than the rest by three steps

Letter
XIV.

*Order of
the sitting of the
states.*

Letter from the second floor, was occupied by
 XIV. the king, who entered by the back-door,
 made purposely to avoid his passing thro'
 the hall: that the king, wearing a black
 velvet hat with an ostrich-feather in it,
 sat in a velvet chair of state raised with
 three steps, and under a canopy of the
 same, embroidered with *Flower-de-Luces* in
 gold, and lined with the finest fables: that
 on his right and left, about seven or eight
 foot distant from him, stood two chairs
 covered with cloth of gold; the chair on
 the right for the cardinal *de la Balue*, to the
 great shame of the king and the nation;
 and that on the left hand, for the king of
Sicily, whose age, royal dignity, and near
 relation to the crown, being the king's
 uncle, would, undoubtedly, have ob-
 tained the precedency under any other
 master. The prince of *Navarre*, count of
Foix, stood on the right of the king's chair,
 and the counts of *Nevers* and *Eu* on the
 left. At the king's right foot, on one of
 the steps of his throne, sat the prince of
Piedmont, then but a youth: and, in fine,
 the count of *Dunois*, great chamberlain,
 being gouty, he was brought upon a very
 low stool, and placed behind the king of
Sicily. On the forepart of the floor, but
 out of rank, were present the viscount of
Narbonne, son to the earl of *Pembroke*,
 half-brother to the king of *England*, by his
 mother

mother *Catharine* of *France* the king's Letter
 aunt, who married *Owen Tudor*, a *Welch* XIV.
 *gentleman, after the death of king *Henry* 
 V. That viscount was the father of *Henry*
 VII. king of *England*. The other lords on
 this floor were the counts of *Tancarville*,
Berueil, and *Longueville*, son to the count
 of *Dunois*; the lords of *Chatillon*, *l'Aigle*,
Craon, *Crussol*, *la Forest*, the cadet of *La-*
val, afterwards archbishop of *Rheims*, and
 a great many others. The entrance of the
 king's salle was guarded by the usual arch-
 ers, commanded by *Guerin le Grouin*, a
 comical sort of name; by which we may
 judge in what sort of people *Louis* put his
 chief confidence. The steps of the throne
 from the second floor were committed to
 the keeping of the lords of *Blot* and *Bellay*.
 The count of *Tancarville* was of the house
 of *Harcourt*: *Bereuil* was count of *San-*
cerre, and afterwards married one of the
 king's bastards: the lord of *l'Aigle* was
 of the house of *Chatillon Peutivere*: the
 lord of *Chatillon* was *Louis de Laval*
Montfort, governor of *Dauphiné*: the lord
 of *Craon* was *Louis de la Trimouille*, af-
 terwards surnamed the *Knight without re-*
proach: the lord of *Crussol* was *James*
Bastel of *Crussol*, great master of the pan-
 try, and one of the favourites: in fine,

* The author calls him a *Welch* prince.

the

Letter the lord of *la Forest* was *Louis* of *Beaumont*, cousin-german to the lord of *Besuire*, both of the house of *Brienne*, a cadet of which, viscount of *Beaumont* in the county of *Maine*, was the first that changed his name for that of his estate.

The second floor was not only bounded, but enclosed by the third, with this singularity, that it left two small spaces between the king's floor, by which they entered on both sides through the passage leading to the throne, and that in each of these spaces there was a bench covered with rich carpets: on the bench on the right, the archbishop of *Rheims*, with the bishops of *Laon*, *Langres*, *Beauvais*, and *Chalons*, all ecclesiastick peers, sate; and on the second on the left, the count of *Dammartin*, grand master, of the name of *Chabannes*, the fires of *Loheac* and *Boismenard*, marshals of *France*, the first of the name of *Laval Montfort*, and the other better known by the name of *Joaachim Rohault de Gamaches*. After them sate the fire of *Torcy*, grand master of the cross-bow-men, of the name of *Estouville*; and, in fine, the last was the admiral of *Bourbon*, tho' the king's son-in-law by his bastard daughter. Within the floor stood first of all two benches covered with rich carpets: on that on the right hand sate the constable of *St. Pol*, and the chancellor of *France*; the first head of the house of

of *Luxembourg*, and the other *William Letter Juvenal des Ursins*, baron of *Tainel*, son *XIV.* to the advocate-general, so famous in the reign of *Charles VI.* They both wore long robes of crimson velvet. A little lower sate *Louis de Harcourt*, a legitimated bastard, but adorned with the title of patriarch of *Jerusalem*, and the bishoprick of *Bayeux*, and afterwards translated to the archbishoprick of *Rouen*; next to him sate the archbishop of *Tours*, and then the bishops of *Paris*, *Chartres*, *Perigueux*, *Valence*, *Limoges*, *Senlis*, *Soissons*, *Aire*, *Auranches*, *Angoulême*, *Lodeve*, *Nevers*, *Agen*, *Comminges*, *Bayonne*, and others who appeared by proxy. On the left bench sate *John of Anjou*, marquis of *Pont-a-Mousson*, duke of *Lorain*, betrothed to the king's eldest daughter; the count of *Perche*, eldest son to the duke of *Alençon*; the count of *Guise*, eldest son to the count of *Maine*, and of the royal house of *Anjou*; the count of *Vendosme*, the count dauphin of *Auvergne*, both of the house of *Bourbon*; and, in fine, the lord of *Gavre Montfort*, the eldest of the house of *Laval*. On the same floor, and over against the constable and the chancellor, the provost and the clerk of the states sate at a little desk; and several of the king's secretaries sate at the feet of the lords of the blood, upon several stools in the middle of the floor. The door of this floor opening into

Letter into the third, and fixed opposite to that XIV. leading to the throne, was kept by the fenefchals of *Cartassone* and *Quercy*, in long robes of black velvet.

In fine, in the third floor (which not only filled all the space from the second to the door of the hall, but likewise enclosed the second on each side by two long alleys, which reached as far as the partition of the king's floor) were placed behind the constable and the chancellor, the lords who had been honoured with foreign embassies, or were of his majesty's privy council; viz. the fires of *Millebourg*, *Maupas*, *Moui*, and *Montreuil*; *Peter d'Oriol*, afterwards chancellor; *John de Poupaincourt*, president of the accompts; *Charles de la Vernade*, *Adam Fumée*, *William Comprain*, *Peter Clarin*, *John Viger*, *John Choart*, *John de Langlée*, *Maturin Baudet*, and a great many others; after whom sat the chancellors and ambassadors of the king of *Sicily*, the duke of *Orleans*, and the count of *Angoulême*. On the other side, in the opposite alley, the chief of the noblesse sat, viz. the fires of *Montjoy*, *Illiers*, *Estouville*, *Ferriere*, *Bonneval*, *Lens*, *Gaucourt*, and *Mouy*; the vidame of *Amiens*, the count of *Nesle*, the count of *Roucy*; the fires of *Senlis*, *Revel*, *Tornalle*, *la Fayette*, *Freignac*, *Monteil*, *Soubise*, *Dampierre*, *Rochechouard*, *Bressuire*, *Hocheliere*,

liere, Mortemar, la Greve, Ruffec, Pre- Letter
uille, Mailly, Crisse, and Tusle; and after XIV.
them a great number of representatives, or
proxies for the rest of the *noblesse*. In
fine, the middle of the most distant part of
the same floor, but facing the king's throne,
was filled with the deputies of the cities
and good substantial towns; three for each,
viz. one ecclesiastick, and two burghers.
The cities which were admitted without
distinction of the provinces, but in an ar-
bitrary rank, as it pleased the king to re-
gulate it, (and in respect of which it was
easy to perceive that he took care to sepa-
rate from one another all those whom in-
terest might join, unless he was well as-
sured of their votes) were *Paris, Rouen,*
Bordeaux, Toulouse, Lyons, Tournay,
Rheims, Troyes, Carcassone, Beziers, Ba-
yonne, Rhodes, Alby, Nismes, Senlis, Xain-
tes, Angoulême, Orleans, Angers, Poitiers,
Limoges, Montpellier, Tours, St. Flour,
Mande, Rochel, Bourges, Aix, Tulle, Ca-
bors, Perigueux, Soissons, Agen, Condom,
Marbonne, Beauvais, Laon, Langres,
Chalons, Sens, Chartres, Compeigne, Dieppe,
St. Lo, Falaize, Viré, Carentan, Valogne,
Monferrand, St. Pourcein, Brioud, le
Mans, Noyon, Evreux, le Puy, Clermont
in Auvergne, Nevers, Meaux, Issoudun,
Niort, St. John d'Angely, Blois, Saumur,
and Millau.

Such

Letter XIV. Such was then the session of the states of *Tours*; in which it is easy to perceive a common practice in despotick princes, or in those who aim at becoming arbitrary; that is to say, that under a pretext of facilitating affairs, preventing vain contentions about ranks and privileges, and hindering discussions that have no essential relation to the matters which are the principal subject of an assembly, they annihilate the rights of the cities, and of the whole body of a state, even so far as entirely to take away the distinction of princes. Nevertheless, *Louis* the eleventh's designs were then only against the great lords; it was upon them that he had fixed his hatred and resentment, looking upon the rest of the *noblesse* as a body so divided, either by different or opposite interests, that he never thought they could do him any harm, unless they were seduced, or personally debauched from his service by the great lords. Besides, a rich and liberal king, such as he was, is never at a loss for methods to get creatures in a body of men, who have no other profession but that of studying how to grow rich, only to ruin themselves afterwards with greater noise and mischief; and we know to what degree *Louis XI.* exerted his capacity in that article. In short, he had succeeded so well in duping the city of *Paris*,

Paris, in the time of the war of the publick good, by a feigned abolition of the imposts, and the creation of a council of government, that he thought himself sure of all the cities in the kingdom by making use of the same methods. It was not then those two bodies that were the principal objects of his precaution: but, on the other hand, his design was, that, under a pretext of a union of interests between the cities, the clergy, or the *noblesse*, of one and the same province, should not be able to form cabals, present petitions or private memorials, or assert the possession of certain privileges, or certain rights which might prove contrary to his will and his views. *Louis XIII.* used to stop his ears with both hands, when any body dared to mention to him any established rights or privileges contrary to his will. *Louis XIV.* a much greater formalist, but not less intent upon the main point to which all our kings drive, did not leave any of those rights or privileges subsisting. But as *Louis XI.* was then but beginning the great work of despotism, he was forced to proceed step by step. Which ought to make us look upon the success of this assembly of the states of the kingdom as one of the most remarkable strokes of his policy. To bring about so great an effect, *Louis XI.* had no occasion to cabal

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*What
measures
he took for
executing
them.*

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cabal or bribe the deputies; he promised great sums, indeed, and gave but little: but in order to prevail upon the *French* to betray themselves, their provinces, their cities, the whole bodies of the *noblesse*, and the clergy; in a word, to make them abandon the right and authority of the states-general representing the whole nation, he stood in need of no other art but to make a little use of the levity of the tempers he had to deal with. For that purpose he proposed his motive to the calling them together; intimating, that having confidence enough in the several orders of the kingdom to make them the arbiters of his difference with his brother, relating to the appenage of the latter, they could not in honour take any other subject in hand without destroying that very confidence; a confidence of which the publick good highly required the perfect establishment; because, that after this trial, the king being sure of the disposition of all the orders, and that of the provinces, could no longer dispense with himself from consulting them in every other important affair, and principally on the imposts, the levying of which became every day more difficult: that in order to avoid all confusion, the ceremonial should be neglected, except in what concerned the royal dignity, which ought to appear in its full splendor on such an occasion.

caſion. That the princes and the great Letter officers ſhould hold there the ranks due to XIV. their birth and their poſts; and that in order to ſhew the *nobleſſe* the eſteem and friendſhip he had for them, he would draw them as near to his throne as the great officers, and the princes themſelves. This he performed, indeed, by the means and diſpoſition of thoſe partitions, of which *Peter d'Oriol* was the inventor: but he did not tell them then, that he would place the deputies of the cities amongſt his *nobleſſe*; or that he would fill up the ſpace behind the conſtable and the chancellor, with the ſink of the magiſtracy of the kingdom, of which he had compoſed his council; or that he would chuſe to ſee the floor between the benches of the lords of the blood and the biſhops, filled with the king's ſecretaries, tho' they had not yet any other privilege but perſonal exemption from the *taille*, rather than by thoſe nobles and brave warriors, who had re-conquered *France*, and expelled the *Engliſh* twenty years before, only to prepare him a throne in which he ſhined with ſo much grandeur, and to which he, by way of preference, drew thoſe neareſt, who had like to have overthrown it by the iniquity of their counſels, and the craftineſs of their chicane.

Letter I confess, without difficulty, on the ques-

XIV. tion which presents itself here, concerning the rank and precedency due to the *noblesse*

The rank which the noblesse ought to have in the state.

over all the other orders of the state, for the decisive and indisputable reason that they are the essential proprietors of it, having conquered and preserved it by arms for so many ages past; I confess, I say, that I am not so prejudiced against custom, as to pretend that the ecclesiastical rank ought to be abolished, or, that the magistracy and the deputies of the third estate ought to be thrown back to the condition of *serfs* from whence they issued: but nevertheless, there are very legitimate distinctions to be made in the examination of this matter. In fact, to pretend that the clergy, who possess their wealth and revenues but by the liberality of the *noblesse*, or the donations or domain of the crown, ought to domineer imperiously over all the members of the state, in matters which no way concern religion; to sustain that they may attribute to themselves a superiority of rank and dignity in a common assembly of the whole nation, merely on account of the priesthood (which in itself is worthy of all our regard, but has nothing to do with the order of the *civil police*) so that this exorbitant rank is no longer founded but on riches and the possession of the great fiefs, of which they

stript

stript the lawful proprietors; in fine, to maintain that this rank should be given them in assemblies where they have no interest, since the business in hand is a weight to be supported by the other members of the state, they having a privilege to be exempt from it, or to impose upon themselves only such sums as they please to contribute towards it, in particular assemblies, from which the other bodies are excluded; is certainly a custom which nothing but *French* inattention can, not justify, but excuse, when it is so solidly established amongst us, as we now behold it.

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It is now no longer time to refer to that favourable distinction of the *noblesse* in the parliaments of the second race, in the reigns of the kings *Gontran* and *Clo-
taire II.* when the clergy, without ceasing to be respected, far from affecting precedence, thought themselves honoured by the second rank. It would likewise be indecent to be perpetually reproaching the third estate, and the magistracy with their primitive condition. The advantages which the whole nation gains by trade, and the custom of honouring the judges, who every day decide disputes concerning our estates and fortunes, are powerful motives for bringing back equality, and making it relished by the *noblesse*, who are

*How they
fell from
their pri-
mitive
grandeur*

Letter XIV. the most concerned in the loss of their primitive rank. But what do I say? Unfortunately for that *noblesse*, equality is is not even the question at present: they are fallen to the lowest rank, in such a manner, that were it not for the unbounded passion we perceive in the plebeians to put themselves in their place by the prince's letters, and the purchase of privileged employments, we could no longer believe that they exist. Some people have sustained in our century, that they did not form a body, and that no particular noble could set forth his common rights before the prince, by the canal of petitions which is allowed to all the other subjects. The event has not belied the proposition; so that the omen of a greater declension hereafter is rendered but too certain for the honour of the *French* blood. However, each century has in such a manner its advantages and disgraces, which mutually interweave one another, that, after all, there is no reasonable man but will acknowledge that the whole society of the nation, and of all conditions, is more advantageous to the *noblesse* themselves, than that superior and incommunicable rank which they so long enjoyed during the ages of ignorance and rudeness. But nevertheless, as it is natural to have less indignation and resentment, against

against a manifest and declared design, however contrary it may be to our interest, than against a hidden scheme, which borrows the help of art, or our own obedience, either to deceive or debase us; I believe there is no nobleman but what is more displeased with *Louis XI.* for the trick he then put upon the body of the *nobleſſe*, than with *Louis XIV.* for the abject condition to which he reduced them, perhaps, without being sensible of all the harm he did them. The apparent idea, by which we may represent the opinion he had of his own monarchy, ought formally to exclude all knowledge of history and past examples; of all the laws of the kingdom he acknowledged none but that of his authority, and, by the help of flatterers, he rendered it despotick over the fortunes and liberties of his subjects, without distinction of any rank or condition, even to such a degree, that in his old age he did, through a principle of conscience, all that he had done in his first years, either by the extravagance of youth, or abuse of his power. But at least he kept a road upon which the people could depend; his maxims of government were not ambiguous.

On the contrary, *Louis XI.* pretended to distinguish the *nobleſſe*, by using them worse than the king of *England*, an irritated conqueror, had done in the states

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A comparison between the conduct of Louis XI. in this respect, and that of Louis XIV.

Letter convoked at *Paris* in 1420 and 1421. He
 XIV. first separated the lords of the blood from
 them, who under *Philip the Fair* and
Charles the Wise thought themselves ho-
 noured, not only with an equal rank, but
 by being charged with the deputation of
 the body. After which he made his coun-
 cil take place before them; and, in fine,
 joined the deputies of the third estate to
 them in the same floor.

Such then was the sitting of the states
 convoked at *Tours*, under the honourable
 pretext of arbitrating the share of the
 king's only brother: but, as I said before,
 the match was so well made, that neither
 the pretended duke of *Normandy*, nor the
 duke of *Bretagne* hoping for any justice
 from it, did even vouchsafe to send their
 ambassadors, or cause their remonstrances
 to be heard. They had, indeed, a better
 resource left in negotiation; since, soon or
 late, the king would find himself forced
 to deliver an appenage to his brother.
 Neither had the duke of *Burgundy* a better
 opinion of the convocation; since he like-
 wise refused to send thither, either the
 deputies of the provinces he possessed, or
 the ambassadors who were to represent
 him.

*A detail
 of what
 passed in
 this as-
 sembly.*

The 6th of *April*, the several members
 of the states having repaired to the hall a-
 bout noon, sate down in their respective
 places,

places, and were admitted by the persons to whom the guarding the entrance of the several floors were committed; but that of the throne remained empty until the king's arrival, who came about two o'clock, having entered by the back-door, which open'd from a prebend's house, and was guarded by the common archers. He was attended by a crowd of court lords, who remained standing during the assembly, and quite out of the ranks: but he was immediately followed by cardinal *de la Balue*, his prime-minister; the king of *Sicily* his uncle, and the count *de Du-nois*, who was carried, on account of the weakness of his legs. They all three sat down in the places prepared for them near the throne. The constable and the chancellor came in together, a little before the king, preceded by mace-bearers and * *Houquetons*, who staid without the door of the hall, through respect to the states. In short, every body being seated, but the lords that stood about the throne, and the first noise inevitable amongst so great a multitude, being over, the chancellor rose from his seat, and having saluted the constable, before whom he was obliged to pass, he advanced up alone to the left side of the throne, kneeled upon the highest

* *A sort of battle-axes.*

Letter step of it, and having taken the king's
 XIV. order, who spoke in a low voice to him a
 few moments, he returned to his place,
 from which he made a long speech on the
 subject of calling the states. He began by
 shewing the importance of the motive to
 the calling that assembly, the king's confi-
 dence, founded on his love for his sub-
 jects, and his opinion of the probity of the
 deputies : after which he ran through
 examples of history, and having acknow-
 ledged and condemned the practice of the
 two first races, which divided the state be-
 tween brothers, he expatiated on the
 smallness of the appenages granted by St.
Louis to his brothers and children ; on the
 shares given to the houses of *Eureux* and
Alexon, and to the duke of *Orleans*, bro-
 ther to king *John*. He touched upon the
 inconveniencies caused by the excessive
 power of the new house of *Burgundy*,
 which had not only delivered up *France*
 to the *English*, but put it into evident
 danger of being ruined and overturned no
 longer than two years before.

Thus after a long speech, wherein the
 scripture was quoted, in order to demon-
 strate the usefulness of concord between
 brothers, his conclusion was, that the
 states should decide, 1st, whether M.
Charles, the king's brother, ought to have
Normandy, which had been ceded to him
 by

by the treaty of *Conflans*, in the perillous circumstance of his union with the duke of *Burgundy* and *Bretagne*, and the danger of the return of the *English*: or whether they judged that the execution of the treaty of *Conflans*, extorted sword in hand from the lawful sovereign, would be as shameful and prejudicial to the monarchy, as it was contrary to all the laws of the kingdom. That they should decide what revenues the king was obliged to allow to his brother, whether by delivering appenage lands, or by pensions, which might attach him the more to his majesty's person, because it would be in his power to augment them, or order the payments to be made punctual and regular. This harangue having taken up the day, the chancellor went to the throne as soon as he had done, and kneeling down again, received a new order from the king, which he delivered at his place, saying that the king adjourned the assembly to the next day; and that during the rest of the present day, the three orders might present him the deputies they had charged to speak in their names. But as he was still speaking, the king rising up suddenly, and retiring with precipitation, the chancellor's words were not heard: so that the session of *Thursday* could not begin till the afternoon, because the clergy's

Letter gy's presentation was not made before the
 XIV. morning, and the harangue of the patriarch of *Jerusalem* spun out the time till the evening. The *noblesse* in a body presented for their speaker the lord of *Taillebourg*, *Oliver de Cotivi*, who had the honour of being brother-in-law to the king, whose bastard sister he had married.

By such methods the following days were consumed : *Monday* and *Tuesday* of the holy week were employed in forming the result of the speeches, which stood in the room of common deliberations : and *Wednesday* in the morning, *John Prevost*, clerk of the states, read them publickly in a session held for that purpose, at the issue of which, the deputies were privately warned to retire as soon as possible, to the adjacent towns and villages, in order to make the best of their way home afterwards, for fear of some sudden enterprize from the duke of *Bretagne*.

Nevertheless, the result or decision of the states was not signed till the next day, *Thursday* the 14th of *April*, in a session wherein two-thirds of the deputies were wanting, and in which the chancellor declared the states to be dissolved, and ordered every one of them to retire to their provinces.

In

In this manner did the assembly end, Letter
wherein the greatest perfidy, and the most **XIV.**
violent conduct were varnished with all the hopes of mildness and benignity ; and with which, however, none of the mem-
bers were satisfied, except the king and his minister, who thought they had deceived every body without being perceived ; but nevertheless they promised themselves never to call another assembly of the states-general, whose presence alone had made them tremble more than once ; not out of any apprehensions that they might decide the appenage of monsieur *Charles* to the disadvantage of the crown, but merely lest they should start the question of the privilege of the deputies for the security of their persons. Thus it is that those who act fraudulently against the rights of other men, are tormented by their own conscience, with anxieties and imaginary fears. The states thought, in the meantime, of nothing less than disobeying or proposing unexpected questions : they contented themselves with speeches and bare words, tending to the facts which they were to treat of. And the result, in the form of loose notes and minutes signed by the deputies general, contains nothing else but a most humble remonstrance to the king, beseeching him not to dismember *Normandy* from his domain, in the juncture
of

The result of it.

Letter of the then disposition of *England*, to bring
XIV. back the war once more into *France*:

~~~~~ that *Normandy* ought to be considered as the key of the kingdom; and that the engagement entered into by the treaty of *Conflans*, could not be looked upon to be binding, having been made in a time of revolt and confusion. That on the other hand, the kingdom was great, and the domain large enough to enable the king to give his brother any other appenage he should think proper, the possession of which would be as honourable and useful to him. That, moreover, they were of opinion, that *Monsieur* ought to content himself with a settlement of 12,000 *livres* a year in lands for his appenage, with the title of dutchy or county, with which it should please the king to adorn it. In fine, they besought his majesty, in consideration of his having but that only brother, to grant him a pension of 60,000 *livres* a year, in order to attach him closer to his person and interest, and enable him the better to support his dignity; but nevertheless, without making a precedent of that liberality, in regard to other sons of *France* that might be born thereafter. But as to the duke of *Bretagne*, accused of detaining *Monsieur Charles* of *France*, with the places of *Normandy* possessed by the *fire* of *Lescun*, and even of holding a cor-  
respon-

respondence with the antient enemies of Letter  
the crown, the king was besought to take XIV.  
the most proper measures for reducing   
him to obedience, assuring him of the service of the three orders; viz. on the part of the clergy, *by the \* contribution of their prayers and orisons*; the noblesse *by their lives and fortunes*; and the third estate, *by an entire submission to his will*.

It is easy to judge by this result, that whole scene of the assembly was reduced to a mere show, and the introduction to a new manner of appearing and deliberating in it. Wherefore the monarch, in some measure carrying on the jest, gave out a publick declaration the next day, in which, after approving the zeal of the states, and expressing his disposition for letting justice take its course conformable to the laws, he consents that the same states, already dissolved and dismissed, shall name commissaries out of their body to make an enquiry after the maleversations exercised in the provinces, and see that the ordinances are strictly put in execution. In this manner did he conclude

*\* A contribution that would cost them no money, and but very little trouble, and do the state quite as little service: however that contribution, it seems, was to be put into the scale against the lives and fortunes of the nobility, and the intire submission of the commons to the king's will. So craftily did the clergy of France know how to play their own game with a crafty sovereign.*

the

Letter the work of this convocation ; of which  
 XIV. we may say, that there never was one of  
 so little use to the good of the state, or less  
 suitable to the interest of those who composed it : for the prince himself reaped no other advantage by it, but that of doing boldly afterwards all the mischief which he committed formerly but with precaution ; and that was the road which led him to raise the *taille* to 5,000,000 *livres* ; a sum sufficient at that time for all the necessities of the state, but indeed far inferior to the expences into which caprice and prodigality had plunged that prince.

Conduct  
 of Louis  
 XI. after  
 the states  
 were separated.

However, this monarch did not repose so much confidence in the resolution of the states, but that he had secured sufficient forces to put in execution whatever should be concluded by them. He then signified to his brother, and the duke of *Bretagne*, the address of the states ; and, without waiting an answer, fell with his army into *Bretagne*, where he immediately made himself master of *Anconis* and *Chantocé* : upon which those provinces, naturally fearful and lazy, and on the other hand wearied with a dispute which there was no likelihood of seeing adjusted in an amicable manner, took a resolution to accept the liquidation drawn up by the states, and stand to the decision of *Nicolas* of *Anjou*, duke of *Calabria* and *Lorain*,  
 and



and the constable of *St. Pol*, concerning Letter  
the settlement of the appenage lands. XIV.  
They likewise agreed that the places in   
*Normandy* held by the *fire of Lescun*,  
should be evacuated within a certain time,  
and delivered into the king's hands.

The duke of *Burgundy* was then encamped on the river *Somme*, ready to enter the kingdom, when the king signified to him the conclusion of the treaty: he was a long time before he would believe it; but having received the news of it from every side, he became more tractable, and willingly received 120,000 gold crowns, which the king remitted to him, for the expences of the war. Our prince paid dear for all this facility in his success; for taking it into his head, that if he could have a conference with the duke of *Burgundy*, he should infallibly gain him over to his side for ever, he proposed him an interview, offering even to make all the advances, and to repair to whatever place in his dominions he pleased to appoint. The duke, whose frankness and vehemence were incompatible with the dark, malicious temper of *Louis*, was so long in resolving upon it, that the king, thinking his project had failed, judged he ought to raise new troubles for the duke, since he despised his friendship. With that view he began to negotiate a new revolt of the  
inha-

Letter  
XIV.

inhabitants of *Liege*; he sent them money; kept up agents in their city; promised them troops, and omitted nothing in order to engage them in a new war against their sovereign. Nevertheless, by a whimsical singularity, it happened at the same time, that the duke, repenting of the ill return he had made to the king's solicitations, demanded of his own accord the interview which he seemed to have rejected.

Matters standing thus, it is hard to conceive how it was possible that the king would go to deliver himself up to his enemy, without either guards, security, or precaution. Nevertheless, he did it with so much danger to his person, that he had like to have lost his life, or at least his liberty by that step. But he came off with both, for the signing a treaty, by which he ceded *Champagne* and *Brie* to *M. Charles* his brother, and for a journey which he took to *Liege* in spite of his teeth, where he received the mortification of seeing the rebellion he had raised, punished before his face.

The king  
tries several  
methods in  
order to  
draw his  
brother  
out of  
Bretagne

The king being returned home, was sensible of all the damage which his inconsideration had caused; but as he was not a man to be daunted by bad success, he studied only how to repair his loss. With that view he employed all his skill upon his

his brother, and applied himself to no- Letter  
 thing but to draw him out of *Bretagne*, XIV.  
 with promises and expressions of a sincere  
 friendship. He feigned to acknowledge  
 himself in the wrong, in having so long  
 delayed giving him a proper settlement  
 and appenage. He remonstrated to that  
 young prince, that their common enemies,  
 and particularly the duke of *Burgundy*,  
 gained advantages by their divisions: that  
 the latter had nothing in his head but evil  
 designs against *France*: that he procured  
 him *Champagne* only with a view either  
 to attach him to his interest, or to wrest  
 some part of his appenage from him af-  
 terwards: that his obstinate refusal to give  
 him his daughter, was a visible proof of his  
 ill-will. He moreover gave him to un-  
 derstand, that he had much more conside-  
 rable views for his establishment; that he  
 had certain means to procure him the  
 crown of *Castile*, by his marriage with ei-  
 ther of the *infantas*; and that in such a  
 case, the dutchy of *Guienne* would fit him  
 much better, both on account of its  
 neighbourhood, and the effectual assis-  
 tance he could draw from it in case of a  
 war. But though these reasons were plau-  
 sible enough, he depended much more on  
 the promise which *Odet d'Aidié*, lord of  
*Lescun*, lately bribed into his interest, had  
 made him to bring his brother to *Tours*.



Letter In fact, poor *Charles* fell into the snare;  
 XIV. he came and delivered himself up with a confidence which his brother was not worthy of, as the end plainly shewed; and he carried his flexibility and openness of heart so far, that he \* revealed to him that the cardinal *de la Balue*, his prime minister, and the bishop of *Verdun*, of the name of *Harcourt*, confident to the cardinal, were betraying him, and labouring to make him (*Charles*) prefer the treaty of *Peronne* to all his promises: he even delivered to the king some letters of their own hand-writing: and the conclusion of all this intrigue was the disgrace and imprisonment of the two prelates on the one hand; and on the other, the acceptance of the dutchy of *Guienne*, with *Xaintonge* and *Aunis*, by *M. Charles*, for his appendage, renouncing at the same time the treaty of *Peronne*, and all the advantages which had been procured him by his allies.

*Who falls into the snare, and delivers himself up to the king.*

*Disgrace of the cardinal minister, and the bishop of Verdun.*

It is hard to tell from whence father *Daniel* has taken an atrocious calumny, which he gives out concerning the lord of *Lescun*, and against all the house of *Aidie*, by making him a bastard of the house of *Armagnac*: but I am mistaken, it is no

\* This is a dreadful caveat to all courtiers not to meddle between the bark and the tree of royalty. The cardinal minister was indisputably a villain, but *M. Charles* was something below a hangman.

calumny,

calumny, it is a visible and intolerable ignorance, in an author who has laid down his infallibility for a principle, upon the foundation that he has often examined every thing, and knows every thing. A second edition will, without doubt, in the present circumstances, repair an error which may be hurtful to the society, and never could be of any service to it.

Letter  
XIV.

As to the \* imprisonments I have just spoke of, we may remark one thing, which is a disgrace to the memory of the princes of the house of *Valois*; and may, in some measure, be compared to the barbarity of the first race of our kings; I mean the horror of the prisons in which they not only shut up state criminals, but likewise those of whom they had but a bare suspicion. We cannot affirm that *Louis XI.* was the inventor of the iron cages and dungeons, which are still seen in several castles formerly inhabited by those monarchs; for they had taken the custom of carrying their prisoners along with them, and lodging them near their own apartments; witness the dungeons which we find at this day in the castle of *Blois*, under the apartment of queen *Catherine of Medicis*. They likewise kept

*Reflec-  
tions on  
the cruel  
imprison-  
ments in  
those days.*

\* This is a scene worth an Englishman's serious attention, as long as there is the least spirit of liberty left in our country.

Letter them sometimes at a distance in strong  
XIV. places, such as the castle of *Loches*, where

~~~~~ *Louis XI.* caused two iron cages to be made; in one of which died *Ludovicus Sforza*, duke of *Milan*, prisoner to *Louis XII.* the great tower of *Bourges*, where the same *Louis XII.* then duke of *Orleans*, was confined three whole years after the battle of *St. Aubin*; the castle of *Angers*, where the bishop of *Verdun* was put into an iron cage, which he himself had ordered to be made for others. *Mezerai* even says, that he was the original inventor of that terrible captivity. As to the cardinal *de la Balue*, whatever the same author and father *Daniel* say of him, I have seen with my own eyes the iron room wherein he was shut up eleven years together; the walls, the floor, the ceiling, the door, the little window for receiving the victuals and emptying the immundities, and even the chimney are of iron, secured by thick bars of the same. This dungeon is in *Plessis-les-Tours*, pretty far from the apartment in which *Louis XI.* died, but under the first saloons of the queen's apartment, which are now fallen to ruin. As to the *Bastille*, it seems it was destined either for the prisoners whom the king wanted to get rid off, or for the form of justice, or the death of the


the * *oubliettes*, much made use of by Letter
Tristan l'Hermite, provost of the mar- XIV.
shals; or, in fine, for those whom he had a
mind should perish through a long series of
miseries; such as the princes of *Armagnac*,
who being buried in dungeons, the bottom
of which was sharp and uneven to the
end, that their feet might not find any
firm treading, nor their bodies take any
rest, were nevertheless taken from thence
twice a week, in order to be scourged be-
fore the governor *Philip Luillier*, and
once in three months to have one or two
teeth drawn. The eldest of those princes
lost his senses in that prison; but the
youngest had the good fortune to be deli-
vered from it by the death of *Louis XI.*
and it is from his petition in the year
1483, that we have the truth of those
facts, which could neither be belived, nor
even imagined, without so certain a
proof.

The year 1470 was almost wholly
taken up in new intrigues; in which it is
surprising enough to see that the king was
intirely the dupe of his courtiers. The
duke of *Guienne*, the constable, the dukes
of *Bretagne* and *Bourbon*, were the princi-
The king is per-
suaded to
make war
against
the duke
of Bur-
gundy.

* So called because people put in that apartment were
never heard of more, and consequently forgotten; their
death being as sudden as the manner of it was terrible,
and the time uncertain.

Letter pal actors in this scene. They wanted to
 XIV. oblige the duke of *Burgundy* to marry his
 daughter to the duke of *Guienne*; and apprehending that they might not succeed in it by the common methods, they laboured to engage the king to make war upon him in order to force him to it, nevertheless without letting the king know the secret of that union.

The surest way to determine the king, was to shew him so apparent a success, that his natural uncertainty on contingent events might stop at some object. For that purpose, the constable assured him, upon his life, of the reduction of *Amiens*, *St. Quintin*, and the other towns along the *Somme*, by means of the intelligence he had procured in those places; because the custom of the house of *Burgundy* was to leave the guard of the towns to the inhabitants in time of peace. He flattered him likewise, that the great cities of *Flanders* were ready to revolt; and so plainly shewed him a great number of other resources, that at last the king resolved to send a *buisfier* of the parliament with two knights, according to the antient custom, to adjourn (*summon*) the duke of *Burgundy*, even in the city of *Ghent*, upon pretext of demands made upon him by the count of *Eu* in the king's court. However, the dissimulation was so profound on the
 part

part of *France*, that the duke, who received no advices from those whom he thought were his best friends, looked upon this proceeding only as an insult by the bye from the king, without being able to persuade himself that an open war was the business in hand. Letter XIV.

Nevertheless, the king desiring to strengthen himself with the suffrages of all his subjects in so great an enterprize, convoked the notables of his kingdom in the city of *Tours* for the month of *November*, 1470.

It is astonishing, that father *Daniel*, who composed his history upon such good memoirs as he pretends, should confound this assembly with the states held in *April* 1467. He even adds, and this stroke may be easily known to proceed from the pen of a jesuit, that *Louis XI.* never assembled any other states-general, because, probably, he found the danger of it, tho' he had made sure of the deputies they were to consist of. *He was sure of the deputies*; these are his words; and he means, that without it a wise prince, such as this was, ought not to refer himself to his subjects, in regard to the resolutions he is to take. But do we not perceive in that expression the ignorance of a man, who undertook to write such a history only by superior orders, without any precedent instruction?

Letter And, do we not likewise discover in it
 XIV. the wicked intention of a party, delivered
 up to maxims the most opposite to the liberties of mankind, and to the good order of a state, which will never exist under a monarchy, without a true understanding between the people and the sovereign; that is to say, without the union of their reciprocal rights, to the exclusion of all corruption, whether by bribes or promises? Were we to criticise exactly, above ten thousand such capital faults as this might be quoted: but in reality, the work will not deserve such a discussion, except in regard to posterity, who may perhaps presume, that an author rewarded with pensions, had sufficient knowledge of his subject in order to deserve such an approbation; whereas it is evident, that he neither learned nor meditated upon history but as he went on with his work. But on the other hand, we ought to learn from this example, that in the society of the jesuits they improve St. *Augustin's* thoughts better than we commonly imagine; since it is he that has laid it down as a maxim, that the best way to learn, *is for a man to teach others what himself never knew.* This is what the jesuits practise in their schools without danger: but if that custom is tolerated in colleges, it ought not to be made use of either in regard to the publick,

publick, or in a history where the author Letter
boasts to have corrected the mistakes of XIV.
all those that ever writ it before.

Let us, however, return to the assembly of the notables, held at *Tours* in the month of *November*, 1470. The pretext for it was, to consult the ablest men in the kingdom about the engagement which several lords of the blood had entered into with the duke of *Burgundy*, by promising to guaranty the execution of the last treaties of peace; and the question was, whether the infractions which that prince was charged with, were sufficient motives to disengage the lords with honour. We cannot tell at present what the form of this assembly was, because we have no monument left of it, except the king's declaration given in consequence of it, which is dated at the castle of *Amboise* the third of *December* 1470. But if father *Daniel* had only taken the trouble to peruse it, he would soon have found out the little foundation for his error. In fact, this declaration mentions the names of all those who were assembled and consulted on this occasion by the duke of *Guienne*, the king of *Sicily*, and the duke of *Bretagne*; and tho' the list is long, I cannot dispense with myself from giving it, both to set forth the men of those days, and that

*Assembly
of the
notables
held at
Tours.*

Letter that you may judge of the rashness of a
 XIV. *jesuit*, who boasts to have seen every
 thing.

*The sub-
 ject of the
 assembly,
 and by
 whom
 composed.*

The preamble to this declaration sets forth, under the epithets of attempts and crimes, the several hostilities committed by the duke of *Burgundy* against the king and the crown of *France*, to whom he was a subject ; so that he was and ought to be looked upon as fallen from all the rights which might belong to him in quality of peer of *France*, and that none of the subjects of the kingdom, and particularly the great princes, so nearly related to the king, could look upon him hereafter but with detestation, as being guilty of so great treasons against *France* his country, and of such felony towards the king his sovereign lord. Then the king says, that in order to be more certain, and to know the sentiments of the greatest number of his loyal subjects on that head, he has convoked an assembly of the notables of the kingdom in the city of *Tours* ; in which were present himself, sovereign king, head and protector of the crown ; *Charles* of *France*, duke of *Guienne*, his only brother ; *René* king of *Sicily* and *Jerusalem*, his uncle ; *John* duke of *Bourbon*, his cousin ; his dear son and cousin, *John* of *Anjou*, marquis of *Pont-a-Mousson* ; his dear cousin *Charles*
 of

of *Artois*, count of *Eu* ; his cousin *Charles* Letter
of *Bourbon*, archbishop and count of *Ly-* XIV.
ons ; the counts of *Guise* and *Perche*, the
the baron of *Bayeux*, the count dauphin
of *Auvergne*, likewise his cousins ; his
cousin the count of *St. Pol*, constable of
France ; the chancellor, *William Juvenal* ;
his cousin *Francis* of *Orleans*, count of
Dunois ; his cousin the bishop and duke of
Langres, peer of *France* ; the bishops of
Avranches, *Soissons*, and *Valence*, his
counsellors ; *René* of *Lorain*, count of *Vau-*
demon ; *Anthony de Chabannes*, count of
Dammartin, grand-master of the household ;
the sire of *Roban* ; the sires of *Loheac* and
Gamaches, marshals of *France* ; *Louis de*
Bourbon, count of *Roussillon*, admiral of
France ; the sires of *Chatillon*, *Laval*,
Craon, *la Trimouille*, *la Forest*, *Beaumont*,
Bacbeque, (one of the fine speakers of his
time, and a partisan of the court) *Mau-*
levrier ; *Brezé*, seneschal of *Normandy* ;
Crussol, great master of the pantry ; *Lude*
Haillon, a new favourite ; master *John le*
Boulangier, first president of the parliament ;
John de Loraine ; *Gaston de Lyon*, senes-
chal of *Toulouse* ; *Guy Pot* knight, bai-
liff of *Vermandois* ; *John de Sallizard* knight,
sire of *St. Just* ; *William Cousinot* knight,
lord of *Montreuil* ; *Saladin d'Augliere*,
lord of *Nogent* ; *James de Beaumont*, lord
of

Letter of *Bressuire*; *John du Fou*, great cup-
 XIV. bearer; *Oliver Droon*, lord of *la Morau-*
 ~~~~~ *daie*; *Tristan l'Hermite*, knight, provost  
 of the marshals; *May de Houtefort*, bai-  
 liff of *Caen*; master *John le Driesche*, pre-  
 sident of the accounts, and treasurer of  
*France*; *Peter d'Oriol* and *John Herbert*,  
 generals of the finances; *John de Poupin-*  
*court*, president of the accompts; *Peter*  
*Poignan*; *James d'Artanay*, lord of *Boi-*  
*cebage*; *Renaud de Dormant*, *Adam Fumée*,  
*Simon* and *John Berrard*, masters of the  
 requests; *William Compains*; *Peter Sa-*  
*lat*; *Peter Gruel*, president of *Dauphiné*;  
*Aubert de Vailly*, reporter in chancery;  
*John Chouart*, lieutenant civil in *Paris*;  
*Bernard Laurchy*, the king's advocate at  
*Toulouse*; *Louis Hastallet*; *John du Mou-*  
*lin*; *Charles des Effarts*, knight; and *Wil-*  
*liam Cerizay*, clerk of the parliament.

Remarks  
 on this as-  
 sembly.

We can remark but two things in this list  
 of persons that composed the assembly of  
 the notables held at *Tours* in 1470. The  
 first is the king's affectation to raise the  
 lords of the blood and the great officers to  
 such a distance from the rest of the *noblesse*,  
 that from thenceforth we hardly find any  
 proportion between them; while, on the  
 other hand, he confounds, with the same  
 affectation, the *noblesse* by birth with the  
*noblesse* by privilege, and the knights of the  
 law,

law, tho' so different in their origin and Letter  
essential characters. We further observe, XIV.  
that in order to decide a case of point of honour, he assembles more magistrates  
than high *noblesse*; because, indeed, he  
delighted in formalities, and was essentially  
a wrangler: a necessary effect of the  
forced policy which he practised all his  
life.

The effect followed close on the threats  
of this declaration, which disengaged the  
princes from all their oaths to the duke of  
*Burgundy*, as being first of all obliged and  
engaged to the king, sovereign of both.  
The taking of *Amiens* and *St. Quintin* be-  
gan the war, which, nevertheless, lasted  
but a year; the king having thought fit  
to prepare himself for receiving the suc-  
cession of his brother, whose death was  
imminent, and caused by a poison which  
tore his intrails with excessive pains for  
six months together. The death of the  
duke of *Guienne* was the last term of the  
unfortunate house of *Armagnac*, fertil in  
great men, if we consider them in respect  
to their courage and valour, but abomi-  
nable in regard to their morals, their cruel-  
ties and injustice, which at last drew down  
upon them the curse of God and man, of  
which the king made himself the most in-  
human executioner. Soon after followed  
the

*Death of  
Charles,  
the king's  
brother.*



Letter the death of the constable *de St. Pol*, con-  
 XIV. demned in parliament, but without the as-  
 sistance of the peers, tho' he was vested  
 with the first post under the crown, and  
 sprung from a house not only sovereign,  
 but which had possessed the empire a long  
 time. He was the first lord on whom we  
 may say the kings took vengeance by judi-  
 cial proceedings, and by a publick death  
 by the hand of the common hangman. In  
 other respects, if we can blame the indig-  
 nity with which the *nobleſſe* suffered the  
 capital judgment of their peers to be taken  
 from them, in order to transfer that au-  
 thority to the parliament, we cannot pity  
 the punishment of so perfidious and double  
 a man as the constable was.

*The con-  
 stable of  
 St. Pol  
 judged by  
 the par-  
 liament,  
 and exe-  
 cuted.*

*Death of  
 the duke  
 of Bur-  
 gundy.* The duke of *Burgundy* lived but one year  
 after that execution, which he had pro-  
 cured by violating his faith. Father *Da-  
 niel* has even remarked, that providence,  
 which saved him in the battles of *Gran-  
 son* and *Morat*, seems to have brought him  
 to perish before *Nancy*, where he had broke  
 his word, by delivering up the constable  
 to the king. This reflection is, without  
 doubt, the more to the honour of his mo-  
 rals, because such examples are not com-  
 mon in his history.

In 1477, the king made away with  
*James d'Armagnac* duke of *Nemours*, his  
 cousin-

cousin-german, by a judgment of the same Letter form ; but with this difference, that if the judges complied with his will, his own heart never was appeased in regard to the scruple which that execution raised in him, and which had, besides, this horrid circumstance attending it, that he placed the children under the scaffold on which the father was beheaded, that they might be sprinkled with his blood. The remainder of his reign was employed in wars, either against the heirs of *Burgundy*, or against *Maximilian of Austria*, her husband : a war so much the more fatal, because it was the source of all those that *France* has since sustained against their posterity.

*Cruelty  
of Louis  
XI.*

In fine, this prince finding himself seized with an epileptick swimming in his head, the fore-runner of a sudden death, he began to travel over all the pilgrimages of the kingdom, and visit all the relicks he could think of. He sent for *St. Francis of Paulo* from *Italy*, in order to prevail upon him, by dint of foundations and charitable donations, to beg of God to restore him his health ; but all this proving in vain, he retired to the castle of *Menils*, or *Plessis-les-Tours*, which he had always taken delight in, and there shut himself up as in a citadel inaccessible to men :

*His death*

Letter men: nevertheless he was followed thither by two enemies, more implacable than all those he had made for himself during his reign; I mean, the sharp stings of his conscience, and the bitter grief to quit his throne and life at sixty years of age.

*The End of the* LETTERS.







A  
Chronological Abridgment  
OF THE  
History of FRANCE

Under the  
Reigns of the KINGS of the  
FIRST RACE.

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By the Count DE BOULAINVILLIERS.

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THE first mention we find of the *French* in the *Roman* history, is in the year 256, and the reign of *Gallus* and *Volusianus*. They passed the *Rhine* near *Mentz* with a design to plunder *Gaul*; but *Amelinus*, who was then no more than a tribune, defeated them, killed 700, and took 300  
Z pri-

prisoners, who were sold. In 358, a band of them settled in *Toxandria*, which is the country of *Kemper* in *Brabant*, *Julian* the apostate reigning at that time.

In 412, the \* *Armorick* provinces having revolted against the *Romans*, the *French* laid hold of that opportunity, and invaded the *Belgica Secunda*, part of which they settled in, and gave it the name of *Ripuaire*. They were, nevertheless, subject to the *Romans*, who would not suffer them to have kings or chiefs: so that in 412, they beheaded king *Theodomer* and his mother.

Pharamond. But in 418 they chose another king, called *Pharamond*, who had but little success, for he was pushed over the *Rhine* again. That year is remarkable for a great eclipse of the sun.

Clodion  
or Clodius.

*Clodion* began to reign in 428; he introduced the custom of wearing long hair, but reserved that distinction for the kings, and those of their blood; the other *French* used to cut their hair in a round form, just covering their ears. *Clodion* passed the *Rhine* in † 431, but was repulsed and defeated by *Ætius*; after which he took up his residence in the castle of *Disparg*, (it is thought to be *Duisbourg* or *Dich-*

\* Bretagne,

† Some authors say 433.

*bourg*, near *Tongres*, on the banks of the *Rhine* on the German side) until the year 436, when finding a favourable opportunity, he led his army through the *Charcoal* forest in *Hainault*, by a very private march, and suddenly made himself master of *Cambray*, *Bavay*, and other neighbouring places. In 444, *Clodion* was again defeated by *Ætius* near *Lens*, *Vicus Helena*, in *Artois*; but the Roman general not being able to compleat his victory, *Clodion* gathered new strength, and pushed his conquests as far as *Amiens*. He died three years after, leaving three sons, who did not reign on this side of the *Rhine*, but retired into *Germany*.

In 448, *Merouée* king of the *French* Merouée  
or Mero-  
veus. joined *Ætius* against *Attila*, who ravaged *Gaul*, and with their united forces they fought him in *campis Secalaunicis*, others say, *Catalaunicis*, in the year 450. *Merouée* greatly extended his conquests, took all the first *Germany*, or territory of *Mentz*, and the *Belgica Secunda*, which, with *Triers* and other countries, contained part of *Normandy* and of the *Isle of France*. He dyed in 458, and was always an ally, or tributary of the *Romans*.

*Childeric* I. his son, reigned immediately after him; but his ill conduct caused him to be deposed, and the *Romans* took in his room *Ægidius*, master of the Ro-



man militia, tho' a stranger, who likewise behaving ill, they recalled *Childeric*. *Ægidius* died in 464. Count *Pol* succeeded him. The reign of *Ægidius* was disturbed by the disobedience of part of the *French*, and the attempts of the \* *Wifigoths*, against whom he defended the cities on the *Loire* by the assistance of the *Saxons*, who came by sea: but those *Saxons* becoming troublesome by their daily pillages, they having even fortified islands in the *Loire*, in order to secure their booty, and shewed a design to seize upon *Angers*, the people cried out to *Childeric* for help: at his return he undertook a war against count *Pol* and *Odoaire* king of the *Saxons*, defeated them first near *Orleans*, then at *Angers*, where he killed *Odoaire* with his own hand, drove the *Saxons* out of the islands, and afterwards came back against the *Germans*, who had entered and committed great ravages in *Gaul*. At his return from that expedition he died at *Tournay* in 481, where his tomb was discovered in 1684, in which there was a ring between him and his effigy.

**Clovis I.**

*Clovis* I. began his reign in 481; his first war was with *Siagrius* son of *Ægidius*, whom he defeated near *Soissons*. The unfortunate prince fled for refuge to the *Wi-*

\* Others write them *Visigoths*.

*figoths,*

*frigoths*, but *Clovis* forced them to deliver him into his hands, and he put him to death in 485, after having prevailed upon him to deliver him up all his places which he still possessed in the name of the *Romans*, viz. *Soissons*, *Rheims*, *Provence*, *Sens*, *Troyes*, *Auxerre*, &c. In 491, *Clovis* married *Clotilda*, daughter to *Chilperic*, king of the *Burgundians*, a christian and catholic princess, who was the occasion of her husband's conversion. In 496, the  *Germans* having entered the territories of the *Ripuaire French*, *Clovis* marched to the assistance of *Sigebert* their king, and gave the enemy battle near *Tolbiac*, which is thought to be *Zulg*, ten leagues from *Collogue*: the danger he was in prevailed upon him to invoke the God of his wife, and promise his conversion; \* which he executed the same year, and was baptised on *Christmas-Day* 496. In 500 he made war upon the *Burgundians*, at the instigation of his wife, who wanted the destruction of her uncle *Gondebaud*, in order to revenge the death of her father: but the *Burgundian* preserved himself by policy. In 502, the people between the

*His conversion.*

\* *St. Waast*, then a private priest, catechized him on the road in his return home, and *St. Remy* completed that great work: several bishops were present at his baptism, which was performed in *St. Martin's church* at *Rheims*.

*Seine, the Loire, and Armorica*, voluntarily gave themselves up to the *French*: the *Roman* garrisons, too weak to defend themselves and retire, also delivered up the places they held, and kept their discipline, name, and habit for some time, which at last were all quite lost and confounded amongst the *French*. In 506, the war broke out with the *Wisigoths*, and in the battle of *Vouglay* *Clovis* killed *Alaric* their king with his own hand.

*Clovis's  
conquests.*

In 507, *Clovis* divided his army, and gave half to his son *Thierry*, who subdued the *Albigesis*, *Rouergue*, *Quercy*, and *Auvergne*; while the king on his side reduced *Poitou*, *Xaintonge*, and *Bourdeaux*, at which place he passed the winter, and in the spring following set out for *Toulouse*, where the *Wisigoths* had laid up their treasure, and where the people willingly submitted to *Clovis*, in order to shake off the *Arian* yoke. In 508, the eastern emperor, *Anastasius*, sent *Clovis* the ensigns of royalty, with the title of consul, with which he caused himself to be vested in a solemn manner in the church of *St. Martin* at *Tours*. This was of great service to him for gaining the *Gauls*. In 509, *Theodorick* king of the *Ostrogoths* in *Italy*, took upon himself the defence of the *Wisigoths* against *Clovis*; and count *Ibba*, his general, defeated the *French* in a pitched battle, of whom he killed



killed 30,000. In 510, *Clovis* laboured to get rid of all the petty kings, or *French* captains, whom he suspected. He enticed *Theodorick*, son of *Sigebert*, king of the *Ripuairies*, to kill his father, and afterwards got the son murdered. He put to death *Cararick* and his son, king of *Ar-ras* or *Triers*, after having forced them to take holy orders: with his own hand he killed *Ranacaire*, king of *Cambray*, and his brother *Riquier*; and caused *Rignomer*, king of *Mans*, to be assassinated. At last, stained with so much blood, he died himself the 15th of *November* 511, and was buried at *Paris* in *St. Peter* and *Paul's* Church, which he had founded, and in which *St. \* Genevieve* had been buried the same year.

*His cru-  
elties.*

In this reign the *French* made some alteration in their discipline; they left off the use of arrows, and took for offensive arms, the sword; the *angon*, which was a † bow of a moderate length, with an iron hook turned up, which bow they both darted and shot with; the battle-ax, which they likewise darted, and called *Francisque*: they wore a broad leather shoulder-belt, a sash of several colours, narrow breeches, and furred caps. All their

*Arms and  
customs of  
the  
French.*

\* *The present patroness of Paris.*

† *If it was not a sort of cross-bow, we have no idea of it.*

armies consisted but of foot, and every *Frenchman* capable of bearing arms was indispensably obliged to military service: they seized upon the third or the fourth part of the lands; preserved several *Roman* customs in the administration of justice; the levying of the imposts, which they softened; the publick diversions, boxing-matches, or rather the combats of the *Cestus*, horse-races, keeping the highways in repair, and the publick carriages. *Clovis* \* re-established the bishopricks of *Belgica*, and was liberal to their churches; but the popes assumed great authority over those churches, because there was no archbishops and patriarchs amongst them, as in the east.

Thierry,  
Clodomir,  
Childebert,  
and  
Clotaire.

In 511, the monarchy was divided into four kingdoms. *Thierry* king of *Austrasia*; *Clodomir*, of *Orleans*; *Childebert*, of *Paris*; and *Clotaire* of *Soissons*; the three latter were the children of *Clotilda*; the eldest of whom was but sixteen years old, and the youngest twelve. In 516, died *Gondebaud*, king of *Burgundy*, leaving his dominions to his sons *Sigismond* and *Gondemar*. In 523, was the war between the *French* and the *Burgundians*; in which *Sigismond* was delivered

\* *Clovis digested the Salick law, and rendered it more conformable to the new religion he had embraced,*

up to *Clodomir*, who put him to death in 524. The same year *Clodomir* renewed the war with the *Burgundians*, and lost his life in it: upon which his kingdom was divided between *Childebert* and *Clotaire*. In 531, *Thierry* put an end to the kingdom of *Thuring*, by the death of its kings, *Hermanfroy*, *Baderic*, and *Bertier*. *Radegonde* was daughter to the latter. In 532 *Childebert* invaded *Septimania*, and vanquished *Amalaric*.

In 534 *Childebert* and *Clotaire* intervened to destroy the kingdom of *Burgundy*, and then divided it between them, after killing their brother *Clodomir*'s children with their own hands. *Thierry* was not willing to have a hand in that conquest; but his *Frenchmen*, disgusted at their not having a share in the plunder, were going to depose him; so that in order to content them, he led them into *Auvergne*, which they plundered, under pretext that the people of that province had attempted to withdraw themselves from his obedience.

Childebert, Clotaire, and Theodebert.

*Theodebert*, son of *Thierry*, carried on a vigorous war in *Septimania*; but as he was besieging \* *Arles*, he received advice that his father lay dangerously ill at *Metz*; upon which he repaired thither with all

\* In Provence.



possible speed, and by that journey prevented the wicked intentions of his uncles. During this reign, the *Baieux* came and inhabited *Rhetia*, which from their name was called *Bajaria*, *Bavaria*. *Theodebert* bought peace of his uncles, and afterwards, in contempt of his wife *Visgarde*, daughter to *Wafon* king of the *Lombards*, married the fair *Deuterie*, a lady of *Cabrieries*, with whom he became acquainted in *Provence*. *Theodat*, king of the *Ostrogoths* of *Italy*, being attacked by *Bellisarius* the *Roman* general, offered to deliver up *Provence* to the *French*, in order to obtain their assistance: *Vitiges* his successor compleated that treaty, which was confirmed by *Justinian*, according to *Procopius*. In 537, *Theodebert* marched into *Italy*, with an intent to destroy both the *Ostrogoths* and the *Romans*, who had weakened each other; but the plague, famine, and the fear of *Bellisarius* made him repass the *Alps*. In 540, *Deuterie* being jealous of her own daughter, caused her to be flung off of the bridge of *Verdun* into the *Meuse*; which action so irritated the *French*, that they obliged *Theodebert* to divorce her, and take *Visgarde* again. In 541, *Theodebert* and *Childebert* united together to strip *Clotaire* of his dominions; but he made head against them; and a great storm, which spared only  
*Clotaire*

*Clotaire's* camp, having terrified the former, they made peace. In 543, *Childebert* and *Clotaire* with united forces carried war into *Spain* against the *Wisigoths*; from whence the former brought back *St. Vincent's* robe, which was the occasion of his founding a considerable abbey in *Paris*, since called *St. Germain*. In 547, *Theodebert* sent another army into *Italy*, which seized upon all the country since called *Lombardy*: nevertheless, his generals had some disadvantages against those of *Justinian*; from whence the latter was so bold as to add to his other titles that of *Franciscus*, or conqueror of the *French*: at which *Theodebert* was so enraged, that he was preparing to go and drive him out of *Constantinople*, when he received a blow on the head by a splinter from a branch of a tree as he was hunting; and a fever ensuing it, carried him off in the forty-third year of his age.\*

His son *Theodebald*, whom he had by *Theode-Deuterie*, succeeded him: he was a weak prince, and impotent from the waist <sup>bald.</sup>

\* *Gregory of Tours* praises him highly for his particular generosity and goodness: he freed the churches of *Auvergne* from the tribute they were obliged to pay to the exchequer: he also lent money to the city of *Verdun* to employ in trade, and afterwards acquitted them of both principal and interest.

downwards.

downwards. The same year died \* *Clotilde*, the widow of *Clovis*, at *Tours*, whither she had retired near *St. Martin's* tomb. As *Theodebert* was a prince that had had vast designs and great enterprizes in view, he laid very heavy burthens on his people, for which *Partenius* his minister, after having kept himself concealed a long time, was stoned by the people at *Triers*, whither he had retired from *Metz*. In 555, *Theodebald* died, after having lost all that the *French* held in *Italy* in his father's life-time.

Childe-  
bert and  
Clotaire.

*Clotaire* seized upon his dominions, and *Childebert* did not stir. In 556, the *Saxons* having revolted at the solicitation of *Childebert*, were defeated several times: nevertheless, on occasion of a battle, which the *French* lost through their own fault, the report of *Clotaire's* death having spread about, *Childebert* entered *Champagne* with an intent to get as much of his brother's kingdom as he could; but he was taken ill in that expedition, and came back to *Paris*, where he died in 558.

Clotaire  
sole king.

After his death *Clotaire* reunited all the *French* kingdoms in his person. Amongst other children, he had a son by *Ghinsine* called *Cbramme*, who had joined *Childe-*

\* She stands a saint in the calendar, and the *French* still perform pilgrimages to her shrine.

bert,



bert, in order to make war against his father. After the death of that uncle, *Chramne* being destitute of assistance, retired to *Conobar*, one of the princes of *Bretagne*, whither *Clotaire* followed him, fought and killed *Conobar*, and took *Chramne* prisoner, whom he shut up in a cottage with his wife and children, and inhumanly burnt them alive in it: this action was soon attended with a most terrible remorse, from which all his devotions could not free him. He died tormented with grief and impatience in the palace of *Compeigne*, in the year 561, and was inhumed at *St. Medard of Soissons*. His marriages were not very regular, for he had two sisters at one time: by *Indegonde* he had *Cherebert*, *Gontran*, and *Sigebert*; and her sister *Harigonde* bore him *Chilperic*: these four divided the kingdom after his death.

*Cherebert*, aged forty, was king of *Paris*; *Gontran*, thirty-six years old, was king of *Orleans*; *Sigebert*, between twenty-five and thirty, king of *Austrasia*; and *Chilperic*, the youngest, king of *Soissons*. Besides these kingdoms, they had each of them a share in *Aquitain*, and another in *Provence*, to the end that they might be all obliged to join their forces against the *Ostrogoths* and *Wisigoths*. This partition produced infinite evils, through the mis-

Chere-  
bert,  
Gon-  
tran, Si-  
gebert,  
and  
Chilpe-  
ric.

under-

understanding between the brothers. In 562, the *Austrasians* elected a lord named *Chrocin*, to be mayor of the palace; but *Chrocin* finding that discipline was declining and growing corrupt among the *French*, and that the authors of the evil were his nearest relations, over whom he had little authority, he chose rather to abdicate his dignity: the nation however left him the choice of his successor, and he appointed *Gogon*, whom he had brought up in his own principles.

In 565, the *Avars*, or people called *Huns*, flying from the persecution of the \* *Turks*, threw themselves into *Germany*, and *Thuring*, where *Sigebert* attacked them, and drove them back as far as the territory of *Compiègne*. During this war, *Chilperic* fell upon him unexpectedly in the year 567; but *Sigebert* defeated him at his return, took the city of *Soissons*, and prince *Theodebert* son of *Chilperic*: a peace was made, and the prince set at liberty.

*Beginning of the reign of the Lombards in Italy.*

In 570 began the kingdom of the *Lombards* in *Italy*, after having conquered all the country from the *Alps* to *Tuscany*, except the *Exarchat* of *Ravenna*, which still belonged to the *Greek* emperor. The name of the *Lombards* comes from

\* *They were then Pagans.*

the usual arms of that people, which were swords and half-pikes plated and pointed with iron, from whence derives the word *balbard*. They inhabited the countries adjacent to the *Baltick Sea* beyond the *Elbe*; and in 568, were called into *Italy* by the eunuch *Narses*; but finding the country much better than their own frozen climate, all the nation in a body went thither, women and children, and brought along with them the rest of the *Gepids*, with 30,000 *Saxons* who were willing to follow them. That very year they endeavoured to seize upon some of the *French* territories near the *Alps*. The patrician *Mummolus* defeated them near *Ambrun*; but they had before killed the patrician *Amat* predecessor of *Mummolus*. In 572, *Cherebert* died at *Blaye*, whither he went to visit the territories of *Aquitain*: his daughter *Berte* was married to *Ethelbert*, a *Saxon* king of *Kent*, \* whom she converted to christianity.

*Cherebert*'s kingdom was divided among the three surviving brothers, as was likewise the city of *Paris*; and it was stipulated that none of them should enter it without the consent of the other two.

\* The author says Canterbury.



Frede-  
degonde.

In 571, *Chilperic* falling in love with *Fredegonde*, one of the retinue of his wife queen *Audouere*, he repudiated the queen; but upon the remonstrances of the grandees, he took another called *Galesuinde*, sister to *Brunebaud*, *Sigebert's* wife; both daughters of *Athanagilde*, king of the *Wisigoths* in *Spain*. This wife had still a more unhappy fate than *Audouere*, for he caused her to be strangled in her bed, though he had had several children by her, and then married *Fredegonde*. But *Sigebert* threatening to go to war with him, he abandoned him the *Bourgeois*, and his share of *Aquitain*, which he had given him for the portion of his wife *Galesuinde*.

In 572, the *Huns* renewed the war; and *Sigebert* going to give them battle, they so frightened the *French* by prestiges and tricks, making monsters and spectres appear before them, (*perhaps, says Mezeray, they had hideous masks, or else blackened their faces*) that they shut him up in a dangerous pass, where he had like to perish; nor could he get out of their hands but by the strength of money. In 573, *Sigebert* made war against *Gontran* for the city of *Arles*, which he wanted to join to *Aix*, *Avignon*, and *Marseilles*, already in his possession; but *Celsus*, patrician of *Arles*, defeated his army. In

574, *Alboin*, king of the *Lombards*, was poisoned by *Rosamond* his second wife, who was enraged at his having forced her to drink out of the skull of her father *Cunimond*, king of the *Gepids*. The *Lombards* then abolished the dignity of king amongst them, and created thirty-two dukes, between whom they divided the country.

In 574, began the war between *Sigebert* and *Chilperic*, in which the latter was the aggressor: he sent his son *Theodebert* to seize upon *Poitou* and *Touraine* belonging to the former, while he himself carried fire and sword into every part of *Champagne*. *Sigebert* having assembled his troops, and sent the patrician *Gontran Bozon* into *Poitou*, he defeated and killed *Theodebert*: on the other hand, *Sigebert* took almost all the towns belonging to *Chilperic*, who was obliged to shut himself in *Tournay*, not daring to keep the field any longer; but *Fredegonde* having hired two assassins, they stabbed the victor in his tent at *Vitry* near *Tournay*, in the forty-fourth year of his age, and fourteenth of his reign, in 575. *Sigebert* had divided his army into two bodies before his death; the first was employed in the siege of *Tournay*; the other, which he commanded in person, was designed to accompany him in the solemnity of the

homage which he required of all the grandees of *Neustria*. *Brunebaud* and her only son were then at *Paris*; and upon the first news of *Sigebert's* death, that city revolted against her: but duke *Gondebaud* had the dexterity to save little *Childebert*, by letting him down the wall in a basket. A faithful servant carried him to *Metz*, where the lords of *Austrasia* acknowledged and proclaimed him, putting him under the protection of king *Gontran*; so that *Chilperic* was forced to content himself with recovering his own kingdom, and lay aside all hopes of getting that of *Austrasia*. He sent *Brunebaud* into exile at *Rouen*; but she debauched his eldest son *Merouée*, who was so mad as to marry her; *Pretextat* bishop of *Rouen* performing the ceremony of the marriage. The father immediately posted thither, set a guard upon *Brunebaud*, and brought back his son, whom *Fredegonde* caused to be shaved, and shut up in the monastery of *Anile*, now *St. Calais*. The *Austrasians* demanded *Brunebaud*, who was accordingly restored to them, and soon after *Merouée* made his escape out of *St. Calais*: *Fredegonde* laid that trap for him in order to irritate his father the more against him. The *Austrasians* refused to receive him; so that he was obliged to wander about a long time in *Champagne*, where he was at last murdered by *Fredegonde's* orders.

In



In 577, *Gontran* adopted his nephew *Childebert* of *Austrasia*, in a solemn manner. In the mean time, *Chilperic* ruined his subjects by heavy taxes; and the people abandoned his territories, in order to retire into the dominions of *Childebert* and *Gontran*: the province of the *Limozin* revolted, but was overpowered by force, and unmercifully plundered by an intendant or referendary of *Chilperic*.

In 579 and 580, three of *Chilperic's* Fredegonde's cruelties. and *Fredegonde's* sons died: the mother, who thought it was a judgment of heaven, obtained from her husband the revocation of some imposts: but as *Chilperic* had a son left by queen *Audouere*, called *Clodomir*, whom she looked upon with rage, she persuaded *Chilperic* that he had poisoned her children; so that he abandoned him to her vengeance: she got him poniarded and thrown into the river, and caused queen *Audouere* to be strangled, though a nun at *Poitiers*.

In 581, there happened some broils between *Gontran* and *Childebert*, caused by a faction of lords devoted to *Fredegonde*; *Gilles* bishop of *Rheims* was the head of them: *Loup*, duke of *Champagne*, persecuted by the faction, retired to *Gontran*, and the patrician *Mummolus* removed into *Austrasia*: immediately after which, *Chilperic* invaded *Gontran's* dominions; and by duke *Didier*, his ge-  
A a 2 neral,

neral, took from him *Perigord* and *Agénois*. In 583, the patrician *Mummolus* sent for a man out of *Greece*, who called himself *Gondebaud*, son of *Clotaire I.* and said he had retired to the court of the emperor *Tiberius*, in order to avoid falling into the hands of his brothers. *Gontran Bozon* took a journey to *Constantinople* to seek for him, but with no other intent than to betray him; for when he arrived at *Marseilles*, he stript him of his money; and having got orders and troops from *Gontran*, he besieged the patrician *Mummolus* in *Avignon*; poor *Gondebaud* flying to an island in the mouth of the *Rhofne*, where he remained concealed two years. The siege of *Avignon* was raised by the interposition of *Childebert*, and *Gontran* defeated some of *Chilperic's* troops in *Berry*, which occasioned a peace.

In 584, *Childebert*, at the solicitation of the emperor *Mauritius*, undertook a war against the *Lombards*, who were then besieging *Rome*. Those people, finding themselves attacked both by the *Greeks* and the *French*, returned to monarchical government again, and chose a king out of their own nation: but they did not abolish the thirty-two dukes before mentioned, they only obliged them to acknowledge and swear allegiance to the new king, and furnish him with a certain number of

of troops. This is the first example of feodality we find in history.

The same year *Chilperic* was assassinated in the court of his palace of *Chelles*, by two wounds given him with a knife. *Fredegonde* was accused of that murder; and she gave room to believe it, by her retreating to the *Asylum* of *Notre-dame* in *Paris*. *Chilperic's* temper impoverished his country by wars and imposts; the licentiousness of the *French* soldiers was extreme; the open country was ruined: on the other hand, that prince was learned, and delighted in the *Roman* diversions and publick spectacles, for which he built a *circus* at *Paris*, and another at *Soissons*. His body lies at *St. Germain des Prés*, where his coffin, and that of *Fredegonde*, were discovered in 1643, under the church door. He left an only son four months old, called *Clotaire II*.

*Chilperic murder'd.*  
584.

*His character.*

The beginning of his reign is remarkable for nothing but *Gontran's* weakness; who being persuaded that *Clotaire* was not *Chilperic's* son, and that *Fredegonde* was the wickedest woman in the world, nevertheless suffered them to live: there is some appearance that the greatest lords of *Neustria* supported them, and that he durst not attack them directly. He sent *Fredegonde* to *Val de Reuil* near *Rouen*; and as soon as she arrived there, she began

*Clotaire II.* 584.



Childe-  
bert.

to tamper again with assassins for murdering *Brunebaud* and *Childebert*.

In 585, the patrician *Mummolus*, the perfidious *Gontran Bozon*, and a few more, thinking they had sufficiently secured their game, drew *Gondebaud* from his island, and proclaimed him king of *Brives la Gaillairde*. All *Aquitain* beyond the *Garonne* acknowledged him, and he was countenanced by *Childebert* and *Brunebaud*. *Gontran* sent *Lendegeffille* and the patrician *Egila* against him and the rebels. *Gondebaud* and *Mummolus* shut themselves up in the city called *Lugdunum Convenarum* (which *Mezeray* translates *Lyons of Comminges*); but *Mummolus* thinking to save his life, delivered up *Gondebaud* to *Gontran's* troops, who killed him upon the spot, and soon after, by the king's orders, they likewise dispatched *Mummolus* and the bishop *Sagetarius*. The same year *Gontran* came to *Paris*, where *Fridegonde*, in order to clear up his doubts, concerning the birth of her son, caused three bishops and three hundred persons of distinction to swear in his presence, that he was *Chilperic's* son. During these transactions, *Leuwigildus*, king of the *Goths* in *Spain*, had married his second son *Hermengildus* to *Ingonde*, daughter to *Sigebert*; and that princess converted her husband to the catholic faith, for the  
Goths

*Goths* were *Arians* : but *Hermengildus* having taken up arms against his father, and leagued with the *Sucævi* and the *Greeks*, found himself nevertheless the weakest : he was taken prisoner, and his father caused him to be strangled. The *Greeks* having got *Ingonde* into their hands, were carrying her to *Constantinople*, but she died in *Africk* during the voyage. *Gontran* and *Childebert*, incensed at the death of *Hermengildus*, resolved to take vengeance for it ; and, to that end, undertook to drive the *Goths* out of *Septimania* : they accordingly invaded that country, and besieged *Nismes* and *Narbonne* in vain. *Leuwigildus*, in the mean time, sought the alliance of *Fredegonde* against their common enemies ; upon which the latter sent ruffians to kill *Childebert*, whom *Gontran* had again declared his heir. *Pretextat* bishop of *Rouen*, whom *Gontran* had also restored to his see, was poniarded by her orders, which murder was committed on *Easter-Sunday*, 587. *Gontran* had the good fortune to avoid, on several occasions, the snares of four or five assassins : nevertheless he attempted nothing against *Fredegonde*.

In 587, *Childebert*, then fifteen years old, executed a memorable justice on the factious in his dominions ; he put to death *Magnoalde*, *Ranchin*, *Urfion*, and *Berte-*

troty convicted of holding a correspondence with *Fredegonde*, and delivered up *Gontran Bozon* to his uncle *Gontran*, that he might make an example of him.

In 588, *Childebert* would pass into *Italy*, at the solicitations of the emperor *Mauritius*; but the *Lombards* fought him in the *Alps*, where he was worsted, and returned home. In 589, *Gontran* continuing the war with the *Wisigoths*, sent duke *Bozon* into *Septimania*, where he was shamefully defeated.

In 590, a great disturbance arose in the abbey of *St. Croix* at *Poitiers*. A council which was assembled justified the abbess, and excommunicated *Crodielde* daughter of *Cherebert*, and *Brasine* daughter of *Chilperic* and *Audouere*: the latter submitted, but the other retired from the monastery, and *Childebert* gave her lands for her subsistence.

The same year a second army of *French*, sent against the *Lombards*, \* perished with hunger; nevertheless the *Lombard* king *Antaris*, in order to deliver himself from all future disturbance, promised a sort of tribute to *Childibert*, provided he should be attacked no more. Some more of *Fredegonde's* assassins were discovered: *Sonni-*

\* *Italy has generally been fatal to the French Armies, either by famine, the climate, or the swords of their enemies,*



*gisile*, convicted of holding a correspondence with her, was killed, and *Giles* archbishop of *Rheims* was deposed and banished. The same year, *Gontran* having made war against the *Bretons*, lost his army in their country, which was commanded by two captains, *Ebracaire* and *Boubelene*; and in 591, he gave a terrible chastisement for the death of a buffalo, which was found killed in the *Vosque* mountains; one of his chamberlains accused of the fact, being stoned to death for it.

In 593, *Gontran* died at *Chalons* on the *Childe-Saone* the 28th of *May* in the 68th year <sup>bert.</sup> of his age. He left but one daughter, who was a nun. *Childebert* succeeded him, and had like to have had a cheap bargain of *Fredegonde*, and her son; but she defended herself at *Marseilles*, beat one of *Childebert's* armies at *Fruic* near *Soissons*, and stood her ground by the assistance of *Landry*, mayor of the palace of *Neustria*, who was thought to be her adulterer.

In 594, *Childebert* extirpated the *Ver-nii*, a people in *Germany*, who had rebelled against him; and in the month of *October* 595, he and his wife were carried off by *sickness*, and perhaps by *poison*, which was equally attributed to *Brune-baud* and *Fredegonde*; the former, because she

Theode-  
bert and  
Thierry.

she wanted to reign, and the latter to gratify her revenge.

He left two sons: *Theodebert*, who had *Austrasia*; and *Thierry*, who had *Burgundy* and the kingdom of *Orleans*. The same year *Fredegonde* retook *Paris*, which *Childebert* has wrested from her son; but she died the year following, aged 55.

Brune-  
haud.

In 597, *Brunehaud*, no less cruel than *Fredegonde*, put to death several *Austrasian* lords, who were dissatisfied with her government, and amongst them the duke of *Wintrion*, a rich and good man; he was father to *St. Gleffina*, who founded an abbey at *Metz*, and turned nun in spite of her family. In 598, the *Austrasian* lords drove out *Brunehaud* with ignominy, led her to *Arcies* on the river *Aube*, and there left her destitute of every thing: in which condition a man of that place conducted her to *Chalons* on the *Saone*, to her grandson *Thierry*, for which he was rewarded with the bishoprick of *Auxerre*. In 599, the two brothers *Theodebert* and *Thierry* made war upon *Clotaire*, and gained a victory over him near *Moret* in the *Gatinois*: the latter lost 30,000 men in that battle, and for the sake of peace ceded to *Thierry* all the country between the *Loire* and the *Seine* as far as the sea; and to *Theodebert* the duchy of *Dentelen*, or the country between the *Oise* and the *Seine*.

*Seine*, or rather the *Somme*, for we know but little of the situation of that country. In 600, the *Gascons* inhabited the country of *Bern* and *Soule*; the two brother kings received them in the number of their subjects, and gave them a duke named *Gemialis*. In 602, *Brunebaud* put to death *Egila*, patrician of *Burgundy*, in order to seize upon his estate. In 603, she fell in love with *Protade* of *Roman* extraction, that is to say a *Gaul*; she made him duke of *Transjuranne*; but desiring to raise him still higher, she prevailed upon *Bertoalde*, mayor of *Burgundy*, to go and levy the imposts in *Neustria*: *Landry*, mayor of that kingdom, opposed him with troops; *Thierry* hastened to the relief of *Bertoalde*, and a bloody battle was fought near *Etampes*, in which *Landry* was defeated, but *Bertoalde* lost his life, and his post was given to *Protade*. In 604, *Brunebaud* succeeded in her endeavours to divide the two brothers, *Thierry* and *Theodebert*; she persuaded the first that the other was a bastard, and so well spurred him on to a war in order to dethrone him, that the two brothers were just upon the point of giving battle; but the *Leudes*, or lords in both armies, interposed between them for accommodating matters: *Protade*, alone opposing the peace, was killed in his tent. In 605, *Brunebaud* took a cruel



revenge on the authors of his death, and got herself other gallants, the scandal of which obliged *Didier* bishop of *Lyons* to make publick remonstrances to her, which were followed by his deposition and death. This same year *Thierry* had a mind to marry, in order to quit his libertine course of life ; but *Brunebaud* obliged him to send back the daughter of a king of the *Wifigoths* in *Spain*, whom he designed for his wife : upon which *Abbot Columban* made christian remonstrances, as well to *Thierry*, to whom he foretold that his bastards should never reign, as to *Brunebaud*, who countenanced the debauchery of her grandson : for this he was taken out of his monastery, and banished the kingdom. In 609, the brothers came to an open war. In 610, the lords prevailed upon them to have a conference together, in which *Theodebert* over-reached his brother, and obliged him to cede *Alsace*, *Suntgow* and *Turgow*, as belonging to him according to the will of their father *Childebert*. *Thierry* being got out of this danger renewed the war, defeated his brother in two great battles at *Toul* and *Tolbiac*, and extirpated him and all his family, whereby he reigned in *Austrasia* as well as in *Burgundy* : he restored the dutchy of *Dentelen* to *Clotaire*, and repenting afterwards that he had destroyed his brother's family, he

he wanted to marry the only daughter left of it; this caused mutual reproaches, at which *Brunebaud* being offended, poisoned *Thierry*, then twenty six years old.

*Thierry* left four children, of whom *Brunebaud* chose two in order to make them reign; viz. *Sigebert* in *Austrasia*, and *Childebert* in *Burgundy*; but the lords of the two kingdoms being weary of the government of this wicked woman, came to an understanding with *Clotaire*, who began to acquire the reputation of a just and virtuous prince. *Arnoul* and *Pepin*, the greatest among the *Austrasians*, delivered up to him *Sigebert*, *Corbe*, and *Merouée*, all three children of *Thierry*: *Varnaquier*, mayor of *Burgundy*, likewise put the army of that kingdom into his hands; but *Childebert* made his escape, and it is not known what became of him. *Brunebaud* being taken in the castle of *Urbe*, was brought to *Clotaire*, who after having ordered *Sigebert* and *Corbe* to be killed, and *Merouée* shaved, and put into acloister, brought on the trial of *Brunebaud* before a general assembly of the nation, wherein he was prosecutor: the issue of the trial was a sentence of death, after which she was put to the torture three days successively; then being tied naked to the tail of an unbroke horse, she was torn and broke to pieces, and her

*Clotaire*  
II. sole  
king.

613.

*Brune-*  
*haude's*  
*punish-*  
*ment.*

mangled

mangled body \* burnt. This execution was performed in *Clotaire's* camp, at *Rionne* on the *Vigenne*, which falls into the *Saone*. Thus *Clotaire*, after the fatigues and troubles of his youth, united all *France* at last; but the kingdoms of *Austrasia* and *Burgundy* would have their separate mayors and governments. *Rodom* was mayor for *Austrasia*, and *Varnaquier* for *Burgundy*.

The patrician *Aletécus* having caballed, was killed in 615. *Clotaire* afterwards applied himself to the restoring peace and concord in his dominions, and abolished all the arbitrary imposts to which the nation had not freely submitted. He committed the education of his son *Dagobert* to the care of *Arnoul* bishop of *Metz*: he raised *Pepin de Landen* (the first of that name) to the mayoralty of *Austrasia*; and at last in 623, being sensible of the difficulty of defending *Austrasia* against its neighbouring barbarous nations, he gave the title of king of it to his son *Dagobert*, then seventeen years of age; reserving nevertheless the country of *Ardenne*s and *Vosge*, with that part of *Aquitain* which had always belonged to *Austrasia*.

Dagobert  
king of  
Austra-  
sia.

\* That queen's tomb is still to be seen at *Autun*, and seems to prove that she did not perish by such a sentence as is here related. *Pasquier* has writ to demonstrate the contrary.

In



In 624, the nation of the *Sclavonians* began to spread themselves from the *Elbe* and *Prussia*, their antient residence, to the *Alps*, and chose for their king a *Gaul* named *Samon*, a native of *Sens*.

In 626, a difference arose between *Clotaire* and his son *Dagobert*, about the lands of *Austrasia*, which the father had reserved to himself: the affair, being referred to the arbitration of twelve *Leudes*, was decided in favour of the son. At this time *Arnoul* of *Metz* resigned his bishoprick, in order to retire into solitude; and *Varnaquier* dying, his son *Godin* who succeeded him, being accused of treason, was killed; so that *Burgundy* was without a mayor. There was a war this year with the *Saxons*; *Clotaire* having entered one of the cantons of that people, put a great number of them to death, sparing none that exceeded the length in stature of his sword.

In 628, there was a great tumult in the assembly of *Clichy*, about the death of *Ermenaire*, intendant of the household of *Aribert*, second son to *Clovis*, who was killed either by *Eghina*, or his people: the former was the father's favourite, but the authority of the *Burgundians* suppressed the enterprizes of both parties, and soon after *Clotaire* died, aged 45.

In regard to the customs of those times, *Customs*  
we observe that the kings were always e-  
lected *of the 6th century.*

Of the  
royalty.

lected out of the royal family, and that three conditions were required for their election : birth, no matter whether legitimate or not ; the father's will ; and the consent of the nation and grandees. The kings had a throne or royal seat without either arms or back to it, to signify that it must support itself. The marks of royalty were long curling hair ; the tunick, and purple mantle ; the diadem, or gold circle round the head, adorned with precious stones. Minor kings were governed by their mothers and a few lords, according to the will of the father, and the disposition of the states ; and those lords were called *nursing fathers*. The kings could conclude peace, but never make war without the consent of the lords and the armies ; the form of consenting was the holding up of hands. In civil discords the lords were often umpires of the differences between kings. In the common assemblies, or *field of march*, in which the kings presided, all differences were settled, and the enterprizes of each year concerted. In that assembly the *French* people conferred the command of the armies on whom they thought fit to chuse ; for it was not attached to the royalty, at least until *Clovis*. The mayoralty of the palace, which was the same post with the pretorship of the *Romans*, was disposed of

Of em-  
ployments.

of by the suffrages of the *French*, and confirmed by the kings. The referendary kept the royal seal, and had under him several petty referendaries and expeditioners, or chancellors; so called because they writ in offices made of wood, called *chanceaux*. The \* apocrisiary was head of the court priests: in the reign of *Pepin the Short* he was called arch-chaplain. The chamberlain had a right and inspection over the king's chamber, and the service of his person. The † count of the stable had the same power over the stables. The king's revenue consisted of domains and imposts, the *French* being entirely exempt from the latter. The royal domains were settled at the time of the general survey, and those men who took care of them were surnamed *fiscalins*: a free domestick, that is to say a *Frenchman*, presided over their conduct, and they gathered up provisions of all sorts to furnish the court in its journeys. The kings hardly took any other title but that of illustrious, *Vir illustris*, a title common to the lords: the *Greek* emperor and the pope used to put their name before that of our kings in writing to them, and, on the contrary, the latter put

\* We suppose it may answer to the post of lord high almoner.

† Master of the horse.



their own names last, even in writing to a simple bishop. The kings married women only for their beauty; slavery, or a mean birth, being no obstacles to so great a dignity; but they did not bear the title of queen till they had had children.

*Different  
conditions  
among the  
French.*

There were but two conditions in the kingdom; the *Gaulish serfs*, a conquered and subjected people; and the *French*, absolutely free, and their conquerors: nevertheless, there was a distinction between the nobles or *leudes*, and the *grandees*; they were particularly distinguished by the terms of major and minor persons. Among the *Gauls* too some were greater slaves than others; the greatest part of the inhabitants of the cities were deemed *ingenius*, at least the best families of them, but all equally excluded from the government and employments: (the only example of the contrary is *Protade*, who did not stand his ground.) The *French* knew nothing of gown-men; they were all military men, and had no other profession than arms. When they were vested with any magistracy, they administered justice in a publick place, their ax and their shield being tied to a post or pillar in the middle of the *malle*, that is to say the assembly: the count of the palace administered justice in the king's court, and the king himself, accompanied by the *grandees*, and likewise the

the bishops, decided the major causes. The cities had their counts, the provinces their dukes, and villages their centurions. The judgments were given without either formalities or writings, and were all without appeal to other courts; for they had no different degrees of jurisdiction: however, any body might bring their cause before the tribunal of the king's court, if they pleased; but in case the first judgment was confirmed, the appellant was either fined or whipt. The counts and dukes had vi-guiers or lieutenants, who administred justice in their absence; they had likewise assessors or *rachimbourgs*. When the dukes held their great assizes, the bishops of the territory were obliged to assist in them. The *Gauls* followed the *Roman* law, and generally settled their affairs by the advice of the priests or bishops, because the *French* had but little knowledge of those laws: but the *French* in time accustomed themselves to the *Roman* law, because their *Salick* law was not extensive enough to provide for all cases.

The same magistrates, dukes, or counts, led the *French* to the wars; and there were no other troops but the *French* of each province assembled in a military body. Letters of exemption were given to old and infirm men; but the others, who failed, were punished either by dispossession of

their estates, or heavy fines. The troops had no pay, and lived upon the publick magazines. The booty they made was laid up, and then divided in common. Prisoners of war were sold, or reduced to slavery by the partition. The grandees accused of crimes were militarily adjudged by their peers, and the judges were oftentimes the executioners of their own sentences. The kings often put people to death through passion or hastiness, and sometimes through avarice, and after the execution they would procure a sentence of death. Every private *Frenchman* had a full right to endeavour to procure a reparation, by arms, of the injuries he thought had been done him; which oftentimes occasioned great slaughters amongst them, except the kings or the lords interposed. Murders were always redeemed by money, and the punishment for crimes, except those that prejudiced the state, was always pecuniary: if the criminal had not money enough, his relations were bound to pay it. When proofs were wanting in a law-suit, the parties came to a combat, either by themselves, or by champions whom they appointed in their room. The trials by a hot iron, cold and boiling water, and crosses, were also authorized by the bishops. People were likewise admitted to purge themselves by oath on the shrines of the saints, and to get



get a certain number of persons of both sexes to swear for them, or along with them; but this was practised mostly in accusations of adultery. The kings, and even the *French* gave themselves full liberty to divorce their wives, and to keep one or more concubines.

The coin was of a finer standard than *Of the* either that of the *Romans* or the *Wifigoths*; *coin.* and they said it was a proof of the excellency of the *French* royalty. Payments specified in metal, were made in gold or silver, uncoined as well as coined. The *Lan-* common language of the *French* was the *guage.* *Tudesk*; the *Neustrians* were the first that corrupted it, and by a *Roman* rusticity, gave beginning to the *Romanish* or *Roman*, from whence we derive the language we now make use of.

Notwithstanding the christianity of the *State of* kings, and the care of the prelates to pull *the* down the temples of the idols, there re- *church.* mained a great many heathens, even among the *French* and the highest grandees. Those that were converted, kept all the superstitions of their old religion, and introduced them into the new one. The church grew richer every day; for *Clovis* not only granted to the prelates the enjoyment of the revenues that had been given to it by the *Gauls*, but both he and his children augmented them by particular donations,

and the foundation of several monasteries. The riches of the churches soon began to be coveted by the *French*; some of them renouncing the first employments in the state for the sake of a mitre; and the royal favour over-ruled the liberty of the elections, which were not made without their permission: so that invasions became frequent, and simony had no longer any bounds. Amongst the wickedest bishops of the sixth century, we reckon *Salomius* of *Embrun*, *Sagitaris* of *Gap*, *Contumeliosus* of *Riez*, *Saffarac* of *Paris*, *Gilles* of *Rheims*, and *Cautin* of *Tours*. But there were likewise several excellent pious men of that order, such as *Remigius* of *Rheims*, *Wast* of *Arras*, *Gildard* of *Rouen*, *Aquilin* of *Eureux*, *Comest* of *Bayeux*, *Melennes* of *Renne*, *Avitus* of *Vienne*, *Cesarius* of *Arles*, and *Vienne* of *Verdun*; and next to these, *Algeric* also of *Verdun*, *Lubin* of *Chartris*, *Firmin* of *Uzez*, and *Malo* of *Quidalet*: after them, about the middle of the century, *Nicetius* of *Triers*, *Paul* of *Leon*, *Felix* of *Nantes*, *Aubin* of *Angers*, *Lo* of *Coutance*, *Medard* of *Noyon*, *Saulge* of *Alby*, *Germain* of *Paris*; and towards the end of that age, *Sulpice* of *Bourges*, called the *Severe*, *Gal* of *Clermont*, *Millard* of *Seez*, *Ari-gle* of *Nevers*, and *Samson* of *Dole*. *Maur* disciple to *St. Benedict* brought his order  
into

into *France* about the year 540; and in process of time, it made a great progress. That century also afforded several celebrated monks, from whom most of the abbeyes took their names, as did likewise several from the bishops in whose dioceses they were founded.

The bishops of *Rome* had several domains in *Gaul*; and in order to make the most of them, established a vicar, who to enhance his own authority, established the power of those by whom he was commissioned. The bishop of *Arles* thought himself honoured by that commission, though he might have set up for an important metropolitan himself, since the emperor *Honorius* had made the city of *Arles* capital of seven provinces: but the popes apprehending that this bishop might assume the authority of the great sees, which it seems he had a right to, as being founded so early as the time of the apostles, were very earnest to make him their vicar, and extended his power over the seventeen provinces of *Gaul*; so that under a precarious title, he received an authority which he might have taken of himself; and which afterwards destroyed all those natural rights and authority to which he had a just claim.

The popes always favoured those who appealed to their tribunal: St. *Leo* restor-



ed *Chelidonius* of *Besançon*, though deposed by his vicar *Hilary* of *Arles*; and *Agapet* remitted *Cotumeliosus*, whom his predecessor had judged criminal, and was so in fact. The care of seeing the canons observed, was willingly referred to the popes; which made every body run to them for dispensations and the smallest favours, from whence they soon after acquired the right of giving the greatest. *Gregory I.* very well understood the art of granting favours, as to time and place, in order to fix the authority of his chair: the question about images making some noise in his time, he reprehended *Serein* of *Marseilles* for breaking them to pieces; but applauded his zeal for removing the abuse of them.

*Of councils.*

The *Gallican* church held forty councils during this century; a detail of which would be too long and needless: for, except that of *Orange* in 529, which decided the dogma of grace according to the rigid doctrine of St. *Augustin*; all the others treated of nothing but discipline and private affairs. We learn by the canons of some of those councils, that there was a great number of lepers and Jews in *France*; the church maintained the former, and strictly forbid all commerce with the latter: the church protected, in a special manner, the poor widows and orphans;

orphans; and in trials concerning them, no judgment was scarce ever given, without communicating it first to the bishop. The clergy were strongly attached to the *Roman* law, and helped to propagate it among the *Franks*; but the canons for prohibited degrees were not then troublesome, and were reduced to a prohibition of two brothers or two sisters. The council of *Agde* and the third council of *Orleans*, extended them to the niece, the aunt, the brother's widow, the uncle's widow, the wife's sister, and the cousin-germans.

There was a right of *Asylum* in the principal churches; the security of which the bishops preserved with all their power. Right of  
Asylum.

*St. Augustin* was the first who inclined the people to give the tenth of their revenues, under the title of alms for the subsistence of the poor. Tythes,  
their be-  
ginning. The second council of *Tours* exhorted the people to give it to God, according to the example of *Abraham*. The second council of *Mason* in 585, ordered it, as being grounded upon the new testament, and practised for a long time past by good christians. The temporal lords, proprietors of lands, gave a great deal of them to the bishops and parsons; to whom they ought to belong, if they were of right divine: but as the business then was only to establish them, they did not dispute so exactly about the matter,

They

*Of holy  
days.*

They had but very few holy days, besides *Easter, Pentecost, and Christmas*: the nobles of each diocese were obliged to see them observed in the chief city, and the kings repaired thither as well as the rest of the faithful. In process of time, the bishops left their flocks and their cities, to take up their residence at the palaces of the kings. No tribute was levied upon the church lands, nor on the funds or the persons of ecclesiasticks: the king's judges or receivers exercised no jurisdiction over them; nevertheless, the bishops and abbots themselves established the custom of making presents, called *euloges*, to the kings, in order to obtain their protection; and in process of time, it was required of all as a right belonging to the monarchy. As to the monasteries, the bishops had a full jurisdiction over them, and instituted the abbots; but the custom had begun already of forcing all those who engaged in that profession, never to quit it.

*Dago-  
bert I. and  
Aribert,  
kings.*

*Clotaire* left two children; *Dagobert*, king in *Neustria, Austrasia, and Burgundy*; and *Aribert* in part of *Aquitain*. In 629, *Dagobert* visited *Burgundy*, which had had no mayor of the palace since *Varnaquier*. In that journey he put to death *Brunulph*, maternal uncle to his brother *Aribert*, through state jealousy, for fear he should raise disturbances in fa-  
vour



vour of his nephew. The same year the *Neustrian* lords intirely engrossed the favour of *Dagobert*, who, of all the *Austrasians*, kept none but *Pepin Landen* near his person; but neither left him any authority, nor made any use of his advice.

The *Neustrians* excited him to repudiate his wife *Gomatrude*; after whom he took three others successively: *Ragnetruide* bore him *Sigebert*, who was solemnly christened at *Orleans* in 631, *Aribert* standing godfather; but the latter was hardly got back to *Toulouse*, when he and his son *Chilperic* died, not without suspicion that *Dagobert* had hastened their death.

The same year 631, the abbey of St. *Denis* was founded, in favour of which *Dagobert* pillaged several other churches. There was likewise a war with the *Sclavonians* and their king *Samon*, very little to the advantage of the *French*. The *Bulgarians* having been defeated by the *Huns*, the latter, to the number of 9,000, demanded lands of *Dagobert*, who ordered them to be received in *Bavaria*; but the people of that country killed them all in one night, except 700, who escaped and retired between the *Draave* and the *Saave*, to a place still called the *mark of Venden*. The *Wifigoths* of *Spain* were perpetually setting up and pulling down their

Dago-  
bert I.  
sole king.

their kings : weary of the domination of *Suintila*, they raised *Sisenand* to the throne, who demanded the protection of *Dagobert*, promising to deliver him the great golden vessel of 500 pound weight, of which *Ætius* had made a present to *Torismond*, to recompence him for the service he did the *Romans* against *Attila*. *Sisenand* performed his promise as soon as he was settled on the throne ; but the *Wiggoths* being discontented at it, retook the vessel on the road from *Dagobert's* men : this caused some complaints and threats ; but *Dagobert* at last compounded the matter for 100,000 pieces of silver.

Sigebert  
II.

In 632, the *Sclavonians* ravaging *Thuring*, *Dagobert* being busy in *Neustria*, was obliged, in order to prevail upon the *Austrasians* to repulse them, to give them *Sigebert* for their king. In 634, *Glovis II.* was born of his wife *Nantilde*, who obtained for her son the donation of the kingdoms of *Neustria* and *Burgundy*. In 636, *Eloy*, afterwards bishop of *Noyon*, having been sent to *Judicael* king of *Bretagne*, he prevailed upon him to meet *Dagobert*, and submit to him. In fine, in 638, *Dagobert* died, leaving his son under the guardianship of his mother *Nantilde* and *Ega*, mayor of the palace of *Neustria*. The great gifts which this prince made to the churches, gained him  
extra-

extraordinary encomiums from the monks: nevertheless, those of the abbey of St. *Denis* feigned that he was addicted to debauchery, but that St. *Denis* had miraculously snatched him out of the claws of the devils. Gold and silver became something common in his reign, by the trade with *Italy* and *Spain*, and the pensions he drew from the emperor; so that silks and precious stones began likewise to be known to the *French* of those days. *Dagobert* delighted in luxury and ornament.

From henceforth we shall see little or no power in the kings, but all the authority of the government transferred to the mayors of the palace. *Pepin* put himself in possession of that of *Austrasia*, having forced duke *Adalgise* to cede it to him. *Cunibert*, archbishop of *Rheims*, had the care of young *Sigebert's* education: but the lords of the two kingdoms pretended that the father's treasure ought to be divided between the two young kings, and assembled at *Compiègne* for that purpose. In 639, *Pepin* of *Landen*, at his return from *Austrasia*, died of sickness, after having been mayor seventeen years; a great statesman, and an honest man: by his wife *Itta* he left a son called *Grimoald*, and two daughters, *Aegge* and *Gertrude*: the first married *Angefise*, son to St. *Arnoul*, and was the mother of *Pepin the Young*,

Clovis II.  
The power goes into the hands of the mayors of the palace.



*Young, or Herſtal*: becoming a widow, ſhe went into the monastery of *Nivelle*, whither her mother and ſiſter had already retired. *Grimoald* put himſelf in poſſeſſion of the mayoralty by the aſſiſtance of *Cunibert*; but *Otho*, guardian or nurſing father of *Sigebert*, oppoſed him ſo ſtrongly, that he could not enjoy it till he got him murdered. In 640, *Sigebert* made an unſucceſſful war in *Thuring*, and was obliged to retire. In 641, *Ega*, mayor of *Neuſtria*, died in the palace of *Clichy*; and was ſucceeded by *Erchinoald*, a maternal relation to king *Dagobert*: the lords choſe him, and the king confirmed the election. In 642, the ſtates of *Burgundy* were held at *Orleans*, and at the recommendation of *Nantilde*, they elected her couſin *Flaochat* for mayor or patrician: ſhe died the ſame year. The *Auſtrafians* had a mind to diſpoſſeſs *Clovis*, and unite the three kingdoms: *Erchinoald* and *Flaochat* united, in order to prevent their deſign. The ſtates were aſſembled at *Autun* upon that account, where *Flaochat* cauſed *Guillebaud* duke of *Transjuranne* to be murdered: he died himſelf of a burning fever almoſt immediately after, and his death was looked upon as a judgment from heaven. In 643, there was a famine in *Neuſtria*; and upon that occaſion *Clovis* took the ſilver plates that covered a chapel under which

which St. *Denis's* shrine rested, in order to distribute them among the poor: the monks pretended it was a sacrilege, and that as a punishment for it, *Clovis* was from that time forth afflicted with a weakness of judgment; which is true, but it was a natural disposition. In 650, *Sigebert* died, aged twenty-one: he has been numbered among the saints, and was buried in the abbey of St. *Martin* at *Mentz*, from whence his body was removed to *Nancy* in 1552. We have but few memoirs of the transactions of his reign; for there remains no author of them. He founded a great number of monasteries, which did not contribute a little to his great reputation: he left a son of two years old, called *Dagobert*, who reigned a few years; but *Grimoald* was preparing to dethrone him, under a pretext that *Sigebert* had adopted his son *Cbildebert* before the other's birth.

In 653, *Grimoald* caused the little *Dagobert* to be shaved by *Dadon*, bishop of *Poitiers*, and sent him immediately to *Ireland*, where he was confined in a monastery: his mother *Imnechilde* took sanctuary with *Clovis II.* over whom and his son she gained a great ascendant. The *Austrasians* soon after seized *Grimoald* and his son, under whose name he had begun to exercise some acts of royalty:

*Grimoald*

*Grimoald* received sentence of death in a full assembly of the states, and was afterwards confined. *Erchinoald* exercised the mayoralty of the three kingdoms; and this lord had among his slaves an *English* woman of great beauty, whom he married to *Clovis*, who had three sons by her, *Clotaire*, *Childeric*, and *Thierry*, who all mounted the throne. In 655, *Clovis* died in the twenty-second year of his age: the monks assure us, that it was to punish him for taking an arm of *St. Denis*, in order to place it in his oratory. *Erchinoald* died almost immediately after; and from him *Mezeray* draws the descent of the reigning house of *Lorain* by that of *Alsace*. The *French* put *Ebroin* in his stead, who settled *Clotaire* in *Neustria*, and *Childeric* in *Austrasia*.

Clotaire  
III. and  
Childeric

In 656 and 657, \* queen *Batilde* founded the abbeys of *Chelles* and *Corbie*: she governed with great piety, but reposed too much confidence in priests, even to the expence of her reputation: *Leger*, bishop of *Autun*, and *Sigebrand*, like-

\* *This queen abolished the poll-tax which the Gauls paid, even sucking children: that tax was so heavy, that it prevented their marrying, and obliged them to drop their children, or sell them to the Jews, who afterwards sold them for slaves in foreign countries. This is a very early instance of the tyranny of the French to the people they subdued.*

wife



wife bishop of some other see, were the foremost in her favour. The grandees being offended with the haughtiness of the latter, tried him, condemned him to death, and shut up *Baltilde* in her convent of *Chelles*, where she turned nun. *Ebroin* was the author of this plot, and reserved to himself the prosecution of *Leger* of *Autun*.

In 668, *Clotaire* III. died without issue, and *Ebroin*, without asking any advice, put his younger brother *Thierry* in his room. All the grandees, enraged at that conduct, leagued under the direction of the bishop of *Autun* in *Austrasia*, in order to seek *Childeric*, who was brought with a mighty force, against which *Ebroin* not being able to make head, was reduced to take sanctuary in a church. The *French* drew him from thence, and condemned him to be confined in the abbey of *Luxeuil*. This was a blameable indulgence, as the sequel shewed. *Thierry* was shut up in the abbey of *St. Denis*, and *Ulfad*, mayor of *Austrasia*, became mayor of all the kingdoms; *Leger*, bishop of *Autun*, having, nevertheless, the chief authority in *Neustria*.

*Childeric*  
II. and  
*Thierry*.

In 670, the states made several ordinances concerning the administration of justice, and the reparation of the disorders into which the nation was fallen by the

licentiousness of the wars. But *Childeric's* mind was already spoiled by debauchery; so that whatever measures could be taken, he rendered them fruitless by contrary ordinances, the blame of which was laid on *Leger* of *Autun*, who was obliged to make strong remonstrances to the king, in order to clear himself of that imputation. He appeared at first to yield to those remonstrances; but he conceived a hatred against *Leger* on that account, which broke out soon after; for going to keep *Easter* at *Autun* in 671, he attempted to kill the bishop with his own hand in the baptistery of the church on *Easter Eve*. The latter escaped from his fury, but was taken in his flight, and the king confined him at *Luxeuil*, having with great difficulty spared his life. In 672, the *French* having supported a rebellion in *Septimania* against *Vamba*, king of the *Wifigoths*; the latter had all the advantage in that war, but did no harm to the *French*, and sent back the prisoners with presents. This *Vamba* rebuilt the city of *Carte*, alias *Pompeiopolis*, which from his name was called *Vambilane*, by corruption *Pampeluna*. In 673, *Childeric* sent two dukes to *Leger* of *Autun*, at *Luxeuil*, with orders to try him again; but in the mean time all the grandees of the court conspired his own ruin, in order to revenge an affront.

affront put upon one of them, whom he had caused to be bound to two posts and whipped on the ground, in the same manner as the slaves were used. He was accordingly assassinated at his return from a hunting-match in the forest of *Lockonie*, which some take to be that of *Licheris*: *Bodillon*, who was the injured lord, killed him with his own hand; and his wife and son shared the same fate: but the mayor *Ulfoad* fled into *Austrasia*. This prince's tomb was found a few years ago at *St. Germain des Prez*, along with that of his wife *Bilechilde*, in which was likewise the body of a little child.

Childeric  
assassinated.  
673.

After this event, the lords, who had been to take the bishop of *Autun* out of *Luxeuil*, restored him to his see. The *Austrasians* called home their king *Dagobert* from *Ireland*; and the *Neustrians* took out *Thierry* from *St. Denis*, set him upon the throne, and gave him for mayor *Leudesie* son to *Erchinoald*, who had filled that post under *Clovis II.* In 674, *Ebroin* got out of *Luxeuil*, and privately assembled a few partizans he had left, with as great a number as he could of banished persons, and other people notorious for their crimes: he even made a league with *Ulfoad* mayor of *Austrasia*, and fell all on a sudden on king *Thierry* and his mayor; but the prince escaping from him, he desired a conference with

Thierry  
II. and  
Dagobert.



676. *Leudesie*, in which he caused him to be murdered. This only encreased *Thierry's* hatred against him, and made him oppose his design of resuming the function of mayor more violently than ever. *Ebroin* was therefore obliged to retire into *Austrasia*, where he took it into his head to invent a new stratagem, which was to feign that *Thierry* was dead, and substitute a counterfeit *Clovis* in his room, whom he gave out to be the son of *Clotaire III.* With this phantom he entered *Neustria*, obliging all the people to acknowledge him. *Ulfad* hated the bishop of *Autun*, no less than he did; but *Ebroin* particularly looked upon the latter to be the chief obstacle to his rising to the mayoralty: he therefore sent *Vaimer* duke of *Champagne*, to besiege *Autun*, in order to take the bishop. The city was ready to be stormed, but the prelate thought he ought not to expose his flock to the last violence, and so took a resolution to deliver himself up to *Vaimer*, after having distributed all his money and plate to the poor. *Vaimer* immediately caused his eyes to be pulled out, and shut him up in a monastery. For this service *Ebroin* gave the bishoprick of *Troyes* to the duke by way of recompence, and soon after was restored himself to the mayoralty by an almost general consent: then he ac-  
know-

knowledge *Thierry*, and sent away his counterfeit *Clovis* to live a private life.

In 678, *Ebroin*, under colour of punishing *Childeric's* murderers, raised a cruel persecution against those whom he thought opposed him: he stoned count *Guerin*, brother to *Leger* of *Autun*; and as to the prelate, he caused the soles of his feet to be torn, and his lips cut off, shut him up in the abbey of *Fescamp*, where he kept him two years, after which he assembled a council, in order to proceed against him and some other bishops. *Vaimer* of *Troyes* was dispossessed in that council, and then hanged; *Dadon* of *Chalons*, who had seized upon the bishoprick of *Autun*, and been, as well as *Vaimer*, one of *Ebroin's* instruments of vengeance against *Leger*, was beheaded, as was likewise *Leger*; but the latter was first degraded in form. *Crodebert*, count of the palace, was charged with the execution, which was performed in the forest of *Yveline*, others say, in a forest between *Arras* and *Torrouenne*, in the year 679. In 680, died *Dagobert* king of *Austrasia*. Some authors speak of his sons and daughters, but we have no certain knowledge of them.

The *Austrasians* refused to submit to *Thierry* merely out of hatred to *Ebroin*, and chose two princes cousin-germans, both grandsons to St. *Arnoul*, viz. *Mar-*

tin by *Codulphe*, and *Pepin* by *Ansegise*. This is the *Pepin* whom we distinguish from the first, his maternal grandfather, by the surname *Herstal*, a place near *Liege*, where he was brought up. In 681, war being declared between *Ebroin* and the *Austrasians*, the latter were defeated in battle; upon which *Martin* fled to *Laon*, and *Pepin* further up into *Austrasia*. *Ebroin* drew near *Laon* in order to besiege it, but dreading the length of a difficult siege, he had recourse to a stratagem: he sent two bishops, *Engilbert* of *Paris* and *Rieule* of *Rheims*, to propose an accommodation to *Martin*; to compass which those two bishops took all the oaths imaginable, on the shrines of the saints they brought along with them; but they had had the precaution to take the relicks out of them. *Martin* was credulous enough to trust to their oaths, and come forth to meet *Ebroin*, who got him murdered.

*Ebroin*  
assassinated.

In 682, *Ebroin* himself was assassinated by a lord named *Hermanfroy*, who split his skull with a sword, as he was going to church early in the morning, and thus the *French* were freed from that tyrant. It is surprising that several bishops favoured him, and even the holiest amongst them, such as *Dadon* of *Rouen*, known by the name of *St. Owen*. This prelate imprisoned *St. Philbert* abbot of *Jumièges*, and afterwards



terwards, to avoid giving scandal, banished him to *Poitou*, under a pretext of establishing a monastery at *Herio*, now *Noirmoustier*. In the room of *Ebroin*, *Varaton* was chosen mayor, who immediately treated with *Pepin*; but having associated his son *Villimer*, the latter deposed him, and renewed the war in *Austrasia*: however, the son dying soon after, in 684, *Varaton* resumed his dignity, which he kept but a year, and died in 685. The same year they put *Bertier* in his room, a man unworthy of that post, and against whom most of the *Neustrian* lords implored *Pepin's* assistance. The latter did not fail them; he fought *Thierry* and his mayor at *Tetricastre*, *Peronne*, and *St. Quintin*; and coming off victorious, the royal treasure of *Paris* and *Thierry's* person falling into his hands, *Bertier* was afterwards murdered. Some authors put an end to the reign of the *Merovingians* in 687, because in fact they were then stript of all authority, which was transferred to *Pepin* and his successors.

This new prince and duke of the *French* Pepin duke of the French. thought he did no wrong to *Thierry*, because, according to the antient laws of the monarchy, the command of the armies was distinct from the royalty, and given by election and the will of the people. In 688, he made war in *Frizeland*, and brought

Clovis  
III.

brought *Ratbod* their king under subjection. The year following he assembled a council for the regulation of manners and religion. In 690, *Thierry* died at forty years of age, and was buried at *St. Waast* of *Arras*, which he had founded. He left two sons, *Clovis* and *Childebert*, of whom the eldest only was raised to the throne; because, if there had been two kings, there must have been two mayors, and *Pepin* would not divide his authority. In 694, most of the people, subjects, or tributaries to the kingdom of *Austrasia*, shook off the yoke, thus cutting out fresh work for *Pepin*.

Childe-  
bert II.

In 695, *Clovis* III. died at fifteen years of age without issue: his brother *Childebert* II. succeeded him. As he was very young, all the officers stuck close to *Pepin*, which afterwards caused great prejudice to the royal dignity. From the year 690 to 700, there was a war between the *French* and the *Wifigoths*; but we know no particulars of it, except that it was carried on in *Septimania*. In 696, *Pepin* beat the *Frizelanders* again; and in 697, besides his wife *Plectrude*, he took a concubine called *Alpaide*, by whom he had a son named *Charles Martel*, \* *Rambert* bishop of *Liege*, having made remonstrances to him on occasion of that scandal,

\* Some authors write him Lambert.

*Alpaide's* brother got the prelate murder'd for his pains. In 700, *Pepin* caused his son *Grimoald* to be elected mayor of *Neustria*. In 702, an epidemical distemper reigned, which bred worms in the flesh. In 708, *Drogo* or *Dreux*, one of *Pepin's* sons, who was made duke of *Champagne*, died, leaving two sons, *Hugh* and *Arnoul*. In 709, the *Germans* revolted; but as *Pepin* was marching to quell them, he was called home by the death of *Cbildebert II.* which happened the fifteenth of *April 711*. That prince was inhumed at *St. Stephen's of Coucy*, and left two sons; *Dagobert*, and *Cbildebert*, who was named *Daniel*, and brought up a clergyman.

The underhand practices of the 7th Reflections on the intrigues and practices of the seventh century. On the state of the church century are sufficiently described by the history alone: but, by way of reflection, we may conclude, that as christianity increased in *Gaul*, superstition multiplied; the churches swallowed up all the riches of the kingdom. The most perverse men, such as *Ebroin*, thought to gain heaven by assisting at divine service, and founding monasteries. The bishops were masters of all the offerings, and made money of every function their ministry obliged them to exercise: from thence it came to pass, that the bishoprick of *Troyes* alone, the smallest in *Champagne*, was worth more than the whole dutchy; since *Vaimer* quitted it for that



that see. The founders of monasteries took care to exempt them from the servitude of the bishops, it being the only way to secure them their revenues; and that is the reason why exemptions are so frequent in the seventh century, the secular justice being less to be feared: nevertheless, for sundry reasons, the temporal lords renounced their jurisdiction in the abbey lands, in order to conform with the bishops.

The first exemption is, that of *St. Denis*, granted by *Landry of Paris* in 659, at the desire of *Clovis* the second. That of *Corbie* was granted by *Bertefroy of Amiens*, at the request of queen *Batilde* in the year 664. This last exemption makes mention of those granted before to the monasteries of *Agaune*, *Levins*, and *Luxeuil*. In 672, the pope confirmed that of *St. Martin of Tours*, in imitation of those already given; and in granting it, his holiness acknowledges that it is contrary to the holy canons. *Aubert of Rouen* gave exemption to the monastery of *Fontenelle*, in a council which he assembled for that purpose in 682. *Mezeray* remarks, that the last exemptions always exceeded the former, and that the hierarchy thus lent its authority in order to destroy itself and corrupt the monks, to whom nothing is so suitable and necessary as obedience. Never was an age, in which the zeal of the monastick life was more ardent

ardent than in this; a great number of monks came out of *England, Ireland, Scotland*, and even from *Bretagne*. St. \* *Columbanus*, for whom *Cbildebert* built the monastery of *Luxeuil*, was attacked by another monk named *Agrestan*; the council of *Macon* defended his cause, and approved his institution: his disciples, *Gal, Emery, Deile*, and *Eustaise*, spread every where. *Vandril* built a monastery at *Pontenelle* near *Caudebec*. *Riquier, Valery*, and *Josse*, founded three more in *Picardy*. (*Josse* was the brother of *Judicael* king of *Bretagne*, and of St. *Vinoc*, another monk). *Guilian* established one in *Hainault*; *Romaric* another in the country of *Vosque* (now *Rumiremont*): *Tron* founded one in the country of *Liege*; *Bavon* another at *Ghent*, and *Goar* one upon the *Rhine*. All these men led a holy life, and gave their names to their establishments. On the other hand, twelve monasteries were built by *Sigebert* king of *Austrasia*; four in the neighbourhood of *Bourges*, by *Bobelen*, a particular lord of *Berry*; that of St. *Maur des Fosses* by an archdeacon of *Paris*, in the reign of *Clovis II*. *Corbie* and *Chelles* by queen *Batilde*; St. *Waaft* of *Arras* by king *Thierry*, as an expiation for consenting to the death of St. *Leger*; besides which he found-

\* He is one of the greatest of the Irish saints.

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ed Fontenelle, Frescamp, Jumiege, Noirmoustier, Solognac in Limozin, St. Anne in Paris, Sitieu, now St. Bertin, Germerlobes on the Sambre, Lagny, and Fore in Perigord. The women were not less zealous than the men to embrace a monastick life. Besides the abbey of Chelles, St. Fare repaired and beautified that of Faresmoustier; Gertrude, and her sister Begge widow of Ansegise, both daughters to Pepin, built that of Nivelles; Aldegonde, and her sister Vaultinde, that of Maubeuge; and Saleberge another at Laon.

Almost all the bishops were drawn from the monasteries during this century. Among the illustrious ones we reckon Romain of Rouen; Faron of Meaux; Magloire of Dole; Achard of Noyon; Didier of Vienne, martyr'd by Brunehaud; Didier of Cahors, treasurer to Dagobert; Arnould of Metz; Cunibert of Cologne; Ondrille of Bourges; Amant of Tongres or Liege; Owen or Dadon of Rouen, referendary under Clotaire II. \* Eloy of Noyon, first a goldsmith and ennameller, and afterwards a bishop; Landry of Paris; Paul of Verdun; Leger of Autun; Prejet of Clermont, Leger's enemy; Omer of Terouenne; Sulpice of Bourges; Oudrille;

\* St. Eloy is patron of the goldsmiths in France.



*Robert of Strasbourg*; *Ramacle of Tongres*; *Vilbrod*, alias *Clement*, first bishop of *Utrecht*; and *Arnaud of Strasbourg*. As the kings disposed of the elections, there was a necessity of intriguing for their favour, in order to obtain the episcopacy, which was the reason of so many ecclesiasticks hanging on the court, where the bishops had their intrigues, and troubled their heads very little about residence. Few Councils were held in this century. We reckon that of *Macon* in 627, about *St. Columban's* affair; one at *Rheims* in 630; one at *Chalons* in 650; one at *Autun* in 670, called by *St. Leger*; and one at *Orleans* in 645, which condemned a *Monothelite* heretick.

*Childebert* being dead, *Pepin* pitched upon his eldest son *Dagobert* to fill the throne. In 712 *Pepin* made war again upon the *Germans*, and almost entirely subdued them. He married his son *Grimoald* to the daughter of *Ratbod* king of *Frizeland*.

The same year the *Moors* entered Spain, at the solicitations of the children of *Vitiza* king of the *Wifigoths*, who were excluded from the crown by *Roderick*, whose father's eyes had been put out by the orders of the said *Vitiza*. At first they retired into *Tingitania*, of which count *Julian* was governor; which *Julian* immediately

*Dagobert II.*

712.  
The Saracens enter Spain.

mediately joined with, and encouraged their thirst of revenge, because *Roderick* refused to marry his daughter after having debauched her. They all three adressed themselves to *Muza*, an *Arabian* chief in *Barbary*, who gave them troops which were defeated by *Roderick*; but the engagement entered into proved a fatal one in the sequel. *Tarec*, lieutenant to the caliph *Valit*, came to repair the disgrace of *Muza*, and immediately passed the *streights*, which from his name were called *Gibraltar*. He built a fortress at the *Calpeian* rock, and soon after gave battle to *Roderick*, who was defeated and killed along with the greatest part of his countrymen. *Spain* was the price of that victory; for in two years time it was entirely conquered: the remainder of the *Wisigoths* fled into *French* *Gothland*, and some of them to the mountains of *Asturias* and *Biscay*, under the conduct of *Pelagius*, son to *Fasila*, who was the son of king *Chindasuind*. It was this *Pelagius*, or his posterity, who raised the kingdom of *Castile*, and at last drove the *Moors* out again.

In 713, *Pepin* being sick at *Jupile*, and his son *Grimoald* coming to visit him was murdered at *Liege*, as he was offering up his prayers to God at St. *Lambert's* tomb. *Pepin* was sensibly grieved at his death, and severely punished the assassin and his accomplices!

accomplices. He caused *Grimoald's* bastard to be elected mayor of *Neustria*, and died soon after in 714, having held the government twenty-seven years. He left issue *Charles*, afterwards surnamed *Martel*, and *Childebrand*, both bastards. From the latter is drawn the descent of *Robert the Strong*, the stock of the *Capetian* house. His grandson *Arnoul*, son of *Drogon*, was mayor of *Neustria*; and *Theodoald*, son of *Grimoald*, of *Austrasia*: but his widow *Plectrude* seized upon the government, put *Charles* under arrest at *Cologne*; to whom it was said, that his father had granted the title of duke of the *French*; and under *Theodoald's* name, made war against the *Neustrians*. The latter chose *Ragenfroy* for their mayor, who defeated the *Austrasians* in 715.

The year following *Charles* escaped out of prison, and overthrew *Ragenfroy* in battle. The same year *Dagobert II.* died, leaving a child in the cradle named *Tbierry*. *Ragenfroy* took *Daniel* out of the monastery, and crowned him under the name of *Chilperic II.* We are not certain who was his father, tho' he was of the royal line. Since *Clovis II.* the kings did not wear their hair so long as formerly, and cut it on the forehead and head, but let it grow behind. In 716, *Ragenfroy* and *Ratbod* united, and after ravaging all *Austrasia*,

*Chilperic II.*  
*Charles Martel.*



*Austrasia*, laid siege to *Cologne*: *Plectrude* prevailed upon them for a great sum of money to draw off from the town; but as they were retiring, *Charles*, who had secretly assembled some troops, fell upon them at a place called *Amblave* in the *Ardenne*s, near *Stavelo*, and regained part of the booty. In 717 he entered *Neustria* in his turn, and gained a victory over *Ragenfroy* at *Vinciac* near *Cambrai*; after which all *Austrasia* acknowledged him, and *Plectrude* was obliged to deliver up to him all his father's treasure, and likewise *Pepin's* grand-children, *Theodoald*, *Hugh*, and *Amant*, whom he confined under a strong guard. He came as far as *Paris*, and because he wanted a phantom to bear the title of king, and oppose *Chilperic*, he took one named *Clotaire*. In 718, *Ragenfroy* disliking the alliance of the *Friselanders*, who were of little service to him, made a league with *Eudes* duke of *Aquitain*, whose power had been formed during these troubles. The latter came in person to assist him, and they marched together towards *Austrasia*. *Charles* came to meet them, defeated and pursued them to *Paris*; which *Eudes* abandoned, carrying *Chilperic* and his treasure along with him to *Aquitain*. *Charles* followed him into *Touraine*, from whence he marched back on account of the death of his king *Clotaire*. He governed

Clotaire.

verned some time alone; then perceiving that the *French* would have a king, he demanded again *Chilperic* from *Eudes*, offering him an advantageous peace, which the latter accepted, and restor'd the phantom, which *Charles* caused to be acknowledged in the three kingdoms. It is remarked, that pope *Gregory* the second writing to *Charles*, stiles him duke and mayor of the palace of *France*; from whence we refer that he was not the king's officer, but the states. In 720, *Charles Martel* carried war into *Saxony*, but met with no success. The *Saracens* pursuing their conquests, entered *France*, pretending that *Septimania* ought to belong to them, since it was part of the kingdom of the *Wifigoths*. They took *Narbonne*, and besieged *Toulouse*. Duke *Eudes* obliged them to raise the siege; but another general re-entered *France* in 721, and took possession of *Carcassone*, *Nismes*, and all *Languedoc*, as far as the *Rhone*. The same year *Chilperic* died without issue.

*Charles* set upon the throne in his room <sup>Thierry</sup> *Thierry*, surnamed of *Chelles*, son of *Da-* II.  
*gobert* II. *Ragenfroy* still subsisted, and was in possession of *Anjou*; *Charles* marched thither in 722, and reduced him to the condition of a private man. In the four or five years following *Charles* made war in *Spain*; from whence he brought *Som-*  
Vol. II. D d *childe*,

childe, niece to Odillon duke of Bavaria; and married her some time after. In 730, the *Aquitanic* war broke out, of which *Eudes* was the cause, by his making an alliance with *Munuza*, chief of the *Saracens* on this side of the *Ebro*, to whom he had given his daughter in marriage. *Charles* immediately invaded *Aquitain*, and forced *Eudes* to submit. In 731, *Abderhame*, lieutenant of the caliph *Trifiscan*, passed the *Ebro* in order to chastise *Munuza*, who had failed in his submission to him. The latter waited for him in arms, but he was defeated in a battle fought in *Cerdagne*, and taken prisoner with his wife, daughter to *Eudes*. *Abderhame* pursued his point against duke *Eudes*, pretending to punish him for his alliance with *Munuza*. The duke abandoned him all *Gascony*; *Bordeaux* was forced and plundered by the *Saracens*, *Eudes* lying intrenched behind the *Dordogne*, because he was vastly inferior in number. There he waited the assistance of *Charles Martel*, whom he had acquainted with the danger of that invasion: but those succours staying too long, *Abderhame* passed the *Garonne* and the *Dordogne*, and attacked *Eudes*. The duke defended himself with the utmost bravery, but was forced to yield to numbers, and retired in order to join *Charles*, who was advancing. *Abderhame* like-  
 wife



wife advanced, took *Angouleme* and *Poitiers*, and was marching in order to seize upon the riches of the tomb of *St. Martin* of *Tours*; but *Charles* stopt him with all the forces of *France*, joined by those of duke *Eudes*. The armies remained in sight of each other seven days together, and at last the battle was fought on a *Saturday*, in the month of *October*, 732. *Abderhame* was killed with 100,000 of his men; the rest fled with great precipitation into *Septimania*, but the *French* did not pursue them, having staid to plunder their camp, in which vast riches were found, which they had amassed every where upon their rout. *Eudes* had the honour, and *Charles* all the profit of this battle, on account of the advantageous treaty he made with *Eudes*; who, under the necessity he was in of being relieved, submitted to every thing the other pleased to propose.

The Saracens defeated near Tours.

In 733, *Charles*, at his return to *Neustria*, began to use the clergy ill, and gave the abbeyes, bishopricks, and other benefices, to the officers of his army: he sent *Eucher* bishop of *Orleans* into exile, for making remonstrances to him on that head; and *Rigebert*, bishop of *Rheims*, for remonstrating against the war he made upon *Ragenfroy*. The same year he caused himself to be acknowledged in the king-

dom of *Burgundy*, which till then had acknowledged *Arnoul* son of *Drogon*, the son of *Pepin*.

Charles  
Martel's  
conquests.

In 734, he carried war into *Frizeland*, and subdued part of it: *Popon* had succeeded *Ratbod* in that county. In 735, he passed into *Aquitain*, in order to reduce *Eudes*, who cried out against the treaty of 732, and plundered that dutchy. In the mean while *Eudes* died, and divided his dominions between his children *Hunaud* and *Hatton*; some authors add a third, called *Remistang*, whom others make his wife's brother. *Hatton* had the county of *Poitiers*, and *Hunnaud* had *Berry*, *Limozin*, and the rest of *Gascony*. *Charles* forced them to hold their territories of his dignity, and tender him the oath of fidelity. From thence he proceeded to *Lyons*, and then to *Burgundy*, in order to put a stop to some disturbances raised there; and having secured *Provence* by establishing governors in it, he marched to the *Rhine*, where he defeated the *Saxons*, and drove them from thence, so that they were quiet for some time.

In 737, *Mauronte*, governor of *Mar-seilles*, called in the *Saracens*, in order to render himself independant of *Martel*: he delivered them *Avignon* at first, from which place they spread into *Dauphiné*, *Lyonnois*, and *Burgundy*, some say as far as *Sens*. *Charles* immediately posted thither.

ther, caused his brother *Childebrand* to lay siege to *Avignon*, until the gross of his army arrived, which was no sooner come up but he forced the city, killed all the infidels he found in it, and burnt half the houses. From thence he passed the *Rhone*, and resolved to drive the *Saracens* quite out of *Gaul*: he laid siege to *Narbonne*, which was defended with incredible bravery by *Athim*, governor of the town and the whole province. Nevertheless, the *Saracens* of *Spain* fitted out a great fleet for the relief of *Narbonne*, and gave the command of it to *Amorox* governor of *Tarragonna*, who landed in the lake *Oliver*, between *Salses* and *Narbonne*, with a vast number of troops. The battle was fought at a place called *Sigeac*, where the *Saracens* were defeated: but *Athim*, far from being disheartened at that loss, rather seemed to acquire fresh vigour; so that *Charles* beginning to want provisions, resolved to raise the siege, in order to turn his arms to easier conquests: he seized upon *Nismes*, *Beziers*, *Agde*, and *Maguelonne*, which he entirely dismantled.

In 738, died *Thierry*, called *Thierry* of *Thier-  
Cbelles*, after a nine years imaginary reign. Thier-  
ry's death  
Inter-  
regnum.  
*Charles*, who thought to assume the royal title, after having usurped all the power of it, left him without a successor, which is the reason that we reckon an interregnum of five years after that prince. In 739,



*Mauronte* called in the *Saracens* again, and put *Arles* and *Marseilles* into their hands: but *Charles*, in conjunction with his ally *Luitprand*, king of the *Lombards*, soon took those places from them, and the *Saracens* were forced to retreat into the *Alps*, from whence they nevertheless continued to do a great deal of mischief.

*Church  
affairs.*

The dispute about images was then very warm in the east. The emperor *Leo* being persuaded that image worship was positively forbid by the divine law, resolved to abolish it in his dominions. The monks stiffly opposed him, and, which is astonishing, that controversy produced a great number of martyrs. Pope *Gregory II.* seized that opportunity to withdraw *Italy* from the power of the *Greeks*; and his successor *Gregory III.* went so far as to excommunicate the emperor; but the king of the *Lombards* pretended that he ought to benefit by the obedience withdrawn from that prince; while the pope, on the other hand, wanted to make himself sovereign and intirely independant; so that they fell out about the matter. The pope not being able to do any thing of himself, and foreseeing that he was going to be swallowed up by the *Lombards*, applied to *Charles*, and endeavoured to interest him in his quarrel, by conferring on him the title of patrician, with the sovereignty of *Rome*, and making presents

to him of very considerable relicks. It is observed, that in his letters he gives *Charles* the title of his king or viceroy; but the latter being in friendship with the *Lombards*, the pope could obtain nothing but recommendations and good offices by letters.

In 741, *Charles* fell sick, and died at *Crecy* on the river *Oise*, the 20th of October. He left three legitimate children, that is to say *Carloman* and *Pepin*, by his wife *Chortrade*, and *Griffon* by *Sonichilde*; besides whom he had some bastards, viz. *Remy*, who was bishop of *Rouen*; *Hierom* the father of *Fulrad*, who was the founder and first abbot of *St. Quintin*; and *Bernard*, father of three sons, viz. *Adelard* and *Vala*, counts at court, and afterwards successively abbots of *Corbie*, and *Bernier*, who likewise turned monk. The monks exclaimed at a strange rate against the memory of *Charles*; and it is pretended that *St. Eucher* of *Orleans* had a revelation, in which he saw him burning in hell. Some even pushed their spleen so far, as to say that his body was carried away by devils, and that nothing but a huge serpent was found in his coffin.

Death of  
Charles  
Martel.

*Carloman* and *Pepin* made themselves masters of the state after their father's death, and began to signalize their power by dispossessing their brother *Griffon*, the shutting French.

Carlo-  
man and  
Pepin,  
dukes or  
princes of  
the

shutting up his mother *Soniehilde* in the abbey of *Cbelles*, and putting to death their cousin *Theodoald*, son of *Grimoald*, whom *Charles* had suffered to live. In 742, *Thibaud*, duke of the *Germans*, and *Hunaud*, duke of *Aquitain*, pretended to maintain themselves in independancy: but the two brothers invaded the dominions of the latter, and forced him to beg peace, after taking *Loches* from him, which was one of his most important places. After that peace, the brothers made a partition of *France* at *Poitiers*, by which *Austrasia* and *Germany* remained with *Carloman*, and *Neustria* and *Burgundy* fell to *Pepin's* share. The same year was born *Charles*, afterwards surnamed the *Great*, son of *Pepin*, and his wife *Berthe*, in the palace of *Ingelheim*, on the *Rhine*; and *Carloman* having penetrated into *Bavaria*, subdued the *Germans*.

Birth of  
of Char-  
lemagne.

Childeric  
III.

In 743, the brothers set upon the *French* throne a prince called *Childeric III.* who is thought to be either the son or the brother of *Thierry* of *Cbelles*. He was a mere idiot; so that it seems that in crowning him, they had nothing in view but to get him juridically deposed, as it happened indeed soon after. The same year *Odillon*, duke of *Bavaria*, who had married *Chiltrude* daughter of *Martel* and  
Son-



*Sonichilde*, revolted in conjunction with *Hunaud* of *Aquitain*, and the brothers reduced them. *Carloman* marched afterwards against the *Saxons*, whom he mastered, and took the castle of *Hochsburg*. *Hunaud* put to death his brother *Hartton*, and then turned monk in the isle of *Ré*, leaving his dominions to his son *Gaiffre*, who was about eighteen or twenty years old.

In 746, *Carloman*, whether by strength of mind and conviction of the truths of christianity, or whether by the terror of all that was said about his father's damnation, delivered over his son *Progon*, and all his dominions, into his brother *Pepin's* hands; and after having been to perform his devotions at the tomb of the apostles, he went and took the habit of *St. Benedict*, at *Mount Sorate*, from whence he retired to *Mount Cassin*, in order to avoid the concourse of visits. At the request of *Carloman*, *Pepin* released his younger brother *Griffon*, who immediately eloped, retired into *Saxony*, and from thence to *Bavaria*, whither being hotly pursued by *Pepin*, he was obliged to refer himself to his discretion. *Pepin* gave him the city of *Mans* and twelve counties in *Neustria* for his subsistence. Nevertheless he could not remain quiet, but threw himself soon after into the arms of *Gaiffre*.

*Carlo-*  
*man*  
*turns*  
*monk.*

In

Pepin  
sole prince  
of the  
French,  
assembles  
a parlia-  
ment.

In 750, *Pepin* having adjusted all the springs he intended to put in motion for obtaining the title of king, he assembled a parliament, which, with one universal voice, would have conferred that name on him, as he had the royal power already; if, in order to remove the obstacle of the oath of fidelity taken to *Childeric*, it had not been thought more proper to consult the pope upon what might be done on this occasion. That pope was *Zacharias*, who stood in need of *Pepin* against the *Lombards*, and knew too well what an influence such a decision would have afterwards over people's minds, in favour of the authority of the holy see; for which reason he neither failed nor delayed to send an answer conformable to *Pepin's* views. Upon this, a second parliament was assembled at *Soissons* in the month of *May*, 751, in which a great number of bishops, with *Boniface* of *Mentz* at the head of them, assisted for the first time. It was by their advice, backed with the pope's decision, that the *French* pronounced the deposition of *Childeric*, who was shaved and made a monk at *Sitieu*, from whence he was afterwards carried to *St. Himeran* of *Ratisbon*, where he died. His wife was confined at *Cochelse*. And so ended the line of the *French* kings of the first race.

Childeric  
deposed.

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**ERRATA.**

**P**AGE 24, line 3. instead of *pounds*, read *livres*. p. 40, l. 10. instead of *account*, read *accounts*. p. 80, l. 29, read in the *Parliament Chamber of the Palace*. p. 86, l. 19. instead of *twenty each fols*, read *twenty fols each*. p. 96, l. 9. instead of *Years*, read *Peers*. p. 99, l. 6. instead of 1402, read 1420. p. 154, see line 31. p. 177, l. 23. read *did not*. p. 196, l. 7. instead of *with*, read *which*. *ib*. l. 20. for *person*, read *prison*. p. 210, l. 28. instead of *stiles*, read *stilts*. p. 232, l. 4. instead of *punishing*, read *furnishing*. p. 234, l. 17. instead of *ibey* read *his*. p. 247, l. 18. after *absolute*, add *monarch*. p. 271, after *that*, add *the*. p. 273, instead of *long*, read *long*. p. 286, read *comptroller-general of the Finances*. p. 316, l. 7. instead of *bas*, read *bad*. p. 231, l. 21. read *that exceeded in stature the length of his sword*. p. 328, l. 22. instead of *Charris*, read *Churrier*.

le baronne Monod de France, du Comte de  
effort pour établir l'alliance avec une couronne prus-  
sienne ne s'est encore jamais établie, et on ne peut  
quels d'un certain point de vue. Il y a une certaine  
Le système dans des années, l'Europe, les  
ceux qui ont donné dans de France.  
n'y a pas de point de vue unique, et de plus, les  
De tous les ouvrages de la Comte de Montauville  
de la Rousselle, Bar le Comte de Montauville  
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